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Jacek Bierezin

Three Poems

Jacek Bierezin (born 1947 in Lodz) is a young Polish poet belonging to the generation that, in the course of the 1960s, became increasingly disillusioned with official propaganda and whose poetry is full of irony and sarcasm. His first collection, Lekcja liryki (A Poetry Lesson) appeared in 1972; his second, Wam (To You), had been accepted by the publishing house but was banned by the censor before it could go into print. It is from this book, published last year by the Polish emigré Instytut Literacki in Paris, that the poems below have been taken.

The thing

An immaterial thing should be treated with great care. Protect it from the damp and cold. Also from the heat. Room-temperature is ideal. Polish daily. Use a peacock plume or toothbrush. On holy days do not display conspicuously in the room. It may get frightened and fly away.

Once you're free of it, you may depart to the land of clocks and social harmony.

Elegy

Ash of the poem beautiful and helpless
restore life to orphaned times

bless the steps of those scaling mountains
and heal the wound of air after the falling

to the triumphant give olive branches
out of darkness draw goodness and awaken
conscience

send heroes to the army that is losing
or disarm those standing in closed ranks

ash of the poem beautiful and powerless
for those in exile carry mountains across the sea

turn back the winds and lift the eyelids of the
waiting
and let them see white sails on the horizon

cherish men but do not choose nations
chosen nations breed prophets dreaming of
empire

take faith from the dying and give it to those who
remain
dispel the lie of myths and make the soul mortal

ash of the poem beautiful and defenseless
give hope to those who do not know

and let those who want to
depart with full knowledge and an eye unmovably
clear

Plato

I do not hold it against him that he wanted to banish me from the Republic. I know that he sacrificed me on the altar of the forces of life and light. I know that I was only a shadow, standing between him and the essence of things, which he tried to reach so as to gain *certain* knowledge.

The clarity of syllogism against the night powers of metaphor, dark and terrifying, creating strife and uncertainty, inspiring chaos and fear.

His one-dimensional state, the brain-child of a ponderous imagination, was not the worst of tyrannies. Moreover, it existed only on parchment.

The Plato of my time is not a philosopher.

Translated by ANDRZEJ BUSZA *and* BOGDAN CZERNIAWSKI □

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Stars in the Night

Index, the admirable English quarterly devoted to freedom of expression throughout the world, prints in a recent issue a group of jokes from totalitarian (or, as in the case of Greece, recently dictatorial) countries, and prefaces the selection with a passage from a recent essay, "The Literary Process in Russia," by Andrei Sinyavsky:

IN RECENT TIMES only the joke has preserved that exceptional, spontaneous resilience that is characteristic of art and goes beyond mere freedom of speech. No matter how strongly it is suppressed (and there was a time when you could get five or even ten years for "shooting your mouth off"), it only flourishes on suppression, gaining not in bitterness but in humor and lucidity. Throughout the whole of our thirty-year night and up to the present day, jokes have continued to shine like stars in the nocturnal blackness. ... The future of Russian literature, if it is destined to *have* a future, is being nourished by jokes, just as Pushkin grew up imbibing the tales his nanny told him. The joke is a pure demonstration of the miracle of art, which thrives on the savagery and rage of dictators ....

Epidemic

An English visitor arrives in Moscow, only to find the streets completely deserted. Puzzled, he walks around for a time; there is not a soul to be seen anywhere. At last he meets an elderly invalid, hobbling along with the aid of a stick.

"Excuse me, but can you tell me what has happened here? I've been out in the streets for over half an hour now and you are the first human being I've come across."

The old man nods and says:

"Solzhenitsyn, *znayesh*?"

"Do I know Solzhenitsyn?" replies the Englishman.

"Of course I know Solzhenitsyn, who doesn't these days. But what has that got to do with it?"

"Well, he's a writer and he got expelled ..."

"Yes, yes, I know," interrupts the visitor impatiently. "You don't seem to understand. ... Has there perhaps been an epidemic in Moscow?"

"No, no," says the old man. "No epidemic—they're all at home, writing."

Sweet solitude

General Pattakos, the Prime Minister of Greece under the junta, wined and dined a beautiful young girl friend and then took her home to his villa. As they sat drinking a last glass before retiring for the night, she turned her large blue eyes toward him, embraced him affectionately and said:

"Stelio, my sweet, would you do something for me if I were to ask you a favor?"

"You know I would, darling," replied the general, "you have but to ask."

"All right, then, please give orders for the frontiers to be opened."

"Oh, my precious!" exclaimed Pattakos, deeply moved. "How marvelous of you—you want us to be all alone together!"

Two good reasons

Mr. Kohn, a citizen of Warsaw, decides to emigrate.

He therefore goes to the Passport and Visa Office and, after some argument with a number of underlings, manages to see the highest official.

"Now, Mr. Kohn," the official says to him, "what can I do for you?"

"You can give me a passport, that's what you can do for me," replies Mr. Kohn. "I want to emigrate."

"Emigrate!" exclaims the official. "But why? You must surely have some very good reason for wishing to leave your beautiful Socialist homeland."

"Reason? Of course I have a reason. In fact, I have two reasons. ..."

"Well," says the official, "tell me the first one."

"The first reason is that last night my neighbor, Mr. Adamczyk, came to me and said, 'Kohn, when this regime collapses and we hang all the Communists, you're going to swing with them.' And I don't want to wait for that to happen. I want to get out."

The official smiles and says, "Oh, Mr. Kohn, I assure you, this regime is *not* going to collapse. ..."

"Well, there you are—that's my second reason." □

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Hard Times for Democracy

Freedom prevents not the proletarian from eating but the tyrant from sleeping. — EDGAR MORIN

What is the use of deluding ourselves or trying to delude others? The recent destruction of democracy in India is a severe political blow to people of our persuasion—even if that destruction proves to be only temporary. It does not, of course, invalidate our general argument that democracy is essential, not only to any possible movement toward socialism, but even for rudimentary social progress; but it certainly becomes considerably harder to present that argument persuasively. Throughout the world, at the present moment, democracy is in retreat: which is another way of saying that socialist hopes are also in retreat.

It would be foolish to attempt a comprehensive analysis of the situation in India. Our friends there, whom we might call upon for help, are either in prison or have been forced into political retreat; they cannot speak freely at home or write freely abroad. The journals of the Indian opposition, socialist and otherwise, that we have recently seen try to indicate veiled criticism, but they cannot say what they really think.

Still, a few preliminary remarks may be helpful. In the last several years there has been considerable economic development in India, roughly comparable to that in China. This development belies the catchphrases of those authoritarians who have insisted that in developing countries economic growth cannot coexist with democracy (and of American professors who think that realism consists in regarding authoritarianism as inevitable). Economic growth in India was deliberately shaped by Mrs. Gandhi's government to nurture a class of "kulaks" or large peasant landowners in the countryside and a new bourgeoisie in the cities. This policy had certain short-range advantages in stimulating production and capital formation, but it also led to growing economic disproportions between the contending classes, with the segment of the population below the poverty line (as defined in India!) increasing from 30 percent to 40 percent in the years between 1947 and 1975.

Necessarily, the Indian political opposition—amorphous, in flux, and by no means settled into conventional leftist or rightist ideologies—found itself stressing a number of critical themes. It favored a redistribution of income and more progressive modes of taxation in order to spread the gains of economic growth more equitably among the people. It mounted a campaign against the vast corruption that had come to characterize the ruling Congress party (in part as a consequence of this party having held power too long, in part as a consequence of the lucrative ties it had formed, naturally enough, with the classes to whom it had brought prosperity). And the opposition stressed the need for greater democratization of the country's social and political life, so as to bring the masses into at least the beginnings of decision-making. Led by J. P. Narayan, the admirable septuagenarian who is a veteran of India's liberation struggle against Britain and also its most distinguished socialist, the opposition was able to gather considerable support in certain cities and

Last Words for Our Century

"When there are no papers, there is no agitation."

—PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI
to the Indian Parliament □

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among the young. It held large rallies, it roused sentiment for a renewal of the Gandhian spirit of self-sacrifice and cooperation, it committed itself strictly to nonviolence.

Mrs. Gandhi's jailing of the leaders and militants of the opposition represents, among other things, a decision to continue at all costs the line of Indian development that she had previously chosen. But there is nothing inevitable, nothing fated by History or the Dialectic, in this decision. It does not prove that democracy is impossible in an underdeveloped country, any more than acts undermining or destroying democracy in European countries proved that democracy is impossible in a developed country. What Mrs. Gandhi did was to make a *political* decision—brutal, vindictive, reactionary, for which the ruling clique of the Congress party must take responsibility, and not History or any other impersonal agency.

Theoreticians of authoritarianism—or their half-shamed friends among American professors, European leftists, and conservative *realpolitiker*—will now join, gleefully no doubt, in seeing Mrs. Gandhi's coup as evidence that they have been right all along. They will disagree only as to which variant of authoritarian ideology Mrs. Gandhi has "vindicated." We, for our part, don't believe for a moment that she has vindicated any of them—no more than Hitler or Stalin, Franco or Tito "vindicated" authoritarian thought in the West.

STILL, whatever the explanation for the recent events in India, one thing is clear: for democrats throughout the world, for everyone who believes in a necessary link between freedom and progress, liberty and reform, this is a depressing moment.

And not only with regard to India. We continue to watch the struggle in Portugal with passionate interest and some hope. There is no point in my repeating what Stanley Plastrik says in his valuable first-hand report. But one thing ought to be stressed, and that is the gratification we feel about the role our friends in Portugal are playing. With admirable clarity, both the Socialist and Popular Democratic parties—which together received 64 percent of the vote in the recent election!—have been developing views of a kind we have been committed to in these pages for more than 20 years: the indissolubility of democracy and socialism; the necessity of protecting freedoms of press, speech, and assembly, not simply as "luxuries" for intellectuals but as requirements for the articulation of working-class interests; the view that the alliance between the Portuguese Communists and some Portuguese military represents a marriage of authoritarianism made in hell. Whatever the outcome of the struggle may be—and right now, it seems that the odds are about even—the Socialists in Portugal have made a contribution to the renaissance of socialism in the era of totalitarianism.

This last phrase ought to be remembered. We still live in the era of totalitarianism. It takes various forms, it speaks through various ideologies, but it remains the most poisonous thought and politics in our time. Between socialists and the left-right authoritarians there can be no intellectual compromise, regardless of what arrangements may be necessary for international peace. Fascism and Communism, different yet symmetrical, remain the enemies of hope.

If we understand this to be the central fact of 20th-century politics, we can take a somewhat longer view, beyond the dismay caused by recent events. There are times when the prospects for democracy look better, times when they look worse. But the struggle for democracy—east, west, north, south—remains a crucial precondition for any effort to build a better life. The most revolutionary, the most liberating idea in our time is simply the effort to link democracy—what Mario Soares has called "democracy, period"—with efforts at social change. That remains the socialist idea, and no matter what the difficulties to come, it will persist.

I. H. □

Voices from India

A silence of conformity has fallen upon the Indian press, yet there are ways of speaking, tricks and devices one can learn from other countries, also eastern ones, which have had longer experience still with muzzling the press.

The Economic and Political Weekly, a sophisticated and critical Indian journal, prints on July 5, 1975, a piece that begins:

> Classics broaden the mind. Sometimes, they also help to entertain. Take Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Take the following passage: "...the general elections of December 20 and 21 ... bore the second Bonaparte up Mount Sinai, not to receive laws, but to give them."

The article continues with a long, devastating quote from Marx about Mrs. ... oops, no, Louis Bonaparte. The interested reader can find it for himself. □

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Bernard Rosenberg

CIA, DIA, FBI — and 50 More!

After reading the Rockefeller Commission report, Senator Frank Church declared, "This is just the tip of an iceberg." A little later it looked like the tip of a glacier. From December 22, 1974, when Seymour Hersh's first dispatch on "Massive Illegal CIA Operations" appeared in the *New York Times*, we have been swamped with more "classified" information than anyone can assimilate. A media's worth of the stuff every day, plus weekly and monthly supplements, quarterly reactions, revelations, confessions; horror upon horror.

I. F. Stone's call for liquidation of the CIA surprised no one. Eyebrows were lifted, however, at least mine were, when Tom Braden took the same position. Braden, the conservative columnist? Newsworthy enough. But Braden, the long-time CIA agent who lately views his old organization as a threat to representative government? Much more interesting. Here's the same Braden who by April 1975 finally recounts a story about the time Allen Dulles bought an entire intelligence network "for a lot of money" and it somehow wound up with the KGB. Braden remembers when Dulles was obliged to appear about this matter before Senator Richard Russell's Armed Forces Committee, our first CIA Director announced to those around him, "I guess I'll have to fudge the truth a little." That incident now seems paradigmatic to Braden. It implies power wedded to arrogance, secrecy and deception. This syndrome strikes one agent-turned-pundit as deadly to the democratic process.

The retrospective wisdom or sudden sensitivity of Braden and many men like him, who were immersed in the slime they could not then detect, is more than welcome. But what does it signify if all they have learned is that the Central Intelligence Agency should be abolished? For we have begun to see that the CIA is only one glacier in an Ice Age of covert operations. Since FDR created the OSS during World War II, a monstrously large American "intelligence community" has materialized. Its parts are dispersed like the limbs of Osiris. Seymour Hersh's colleague Nicholas Horrock has disclosed the existence of 10 regular federal agencies employing 200,000 persons who spend over $6 billion a year on intelligence activities. Concerning their machinations only the tiniest tip has so far surfaced.

Maybe Senator Church's Select Committee will discover something about the supersecret National Security Agency—compared to which the CIA is an open book. Horrock tells us that the NSA, with 20,000 employees, functions in a "carefully guarded complex" at Fort Meade, Md. One "facet of its role" is already under Senate investigation, namely, a program allegedly related to code-breaking and electronic spying that permits "eavesdropping on literally thousands of long distance telephone calls" in the United States. Calls outside the U.S. are more frequently monitored. Apparently it's not just Ma Bell who has us by the calls.

Among others, there's the Defense Intelligence Agency with its $100 million budget, a succubus that has been growing by cellular multiplication ever since Robert McNamara conjured it into being. The DIA is supposed to be a huge umbrella under which Army, Navy, and Air Force intelligence services cluster in separate but sometimes parallel or antagonistic action. When in the early '70s military intelligence was caught investigating such prominent politicians as Adlai Stevenson III and infiltrating various domestic groups, we were assured that these escapades would be halted and that the "vast computerized information" derived from them had been destroyed. "Not likely" is what most insiders think. How could such computers so readily disgorge those lovely dossiers?

If it is clear that the CIA overreached itself by encroaching on the domestic field of espionage, sabotage, and provocation, one should not forget that the FBI also greatly overstepped its bounds. Or that a genius in the IRS, not the CIA, dreamed up, say, Operation Leprechaun. In March, after a local exposé, Elizabeth J. Bettner called a press conference to explain that she was only one of 20 or 25 persons in the Miami area hired by Internal Revenue to pick up all the dirt she could on Florida politicians who from 1970 to 1973 annoyed Dick Nixon's gang. She vehemently denied having been ordered to sleep with any victim. If other operatives did that, her "good work" should not be tarnished by their immorality.

Although no past attorney general can "recall" it, CIA Director William E. Colby has testified to a 20-year agreement with the Justice Department not to prosecute CIA criminals. If so, Justice deserves no more exculpation than any other subdivision of the government.

Michael Harrington, the dedicated socialist—not

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Michael Harrington, the liberal congressman who spilled too much about U.S. involvement in Chile—suspects that his syndicated column was dropped by a number of publishers under pressure from Naval Intelligence. He is suing that agency for deprivation of income. Congressman Harrington has been denied access to confidential data since June 1975. F. Edward Hébert, deposed chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, which practices oversight in the original sense of that word, resumed his old seat for the Harrington *auto-da-fé*, as Mary McGrory dubbed it.

The Socialist Workers party, the American Trotskyist—shall we say movement?—has been under continuous surveillance for at least *31* bloody years. By the CIA? No. By the FBI. Through its cunning counterintelligence arm, which is becoming familiar as Cointelpro, 3,138 pages of secret documentation on the SWP have now been made public. And what has all this expenditure of time and money led to? The Newark FBI, with only one forged letter of defamation, followed a scoutmaster whose wife attended party meetings and drove him from his job.

According to Jack Anderson, the Secret Service has a file number, CO 23970009205, on Groucho Marx for a wisecrack he made about President Nixon. The subversive comedian was 80 years old at the time and an obvious danger to the Republic. Look and you will find subtler dangers. The FBI is aware of them. Item: tipped off by H. R. Haldeman that Leonard Bernstein planned to sneak a peace message into his "mass oritorium" at the Kennedy Center, the FBI warned that this "opera" would follow "an antiwar theme," that it would be sung in Latin and that if the President or other important government officials attended they might unwittingly applaud a message inimical to them. The FBI was right. Bernstein's *Mass* did contain one line, "*Dona Nobis Pacem*," or "Give Us Peace," that might have been disquieting to the Administration. Nixon stayed away. (Maybe he also acted out of a deeper conviction. "Stay away from the arts .... They're Jews," is among his more notable aphorisms.) Further item: the after-hour passes of celebrated quarterback Joe Namath, his affair with an airline stewardess and additional proof of Namath's sexual prowess, are the subject of another FBI report. Take one more from the great miscellany currently in Senator Church's hands: a file on Gerald Ford presumably commencing on April 23, 1963, when the FBI bugged a conversation between two AVCO executives discussing how helpful Congressman Ford had been to them.

TRIVIA? But who ever heard of a more devoted trivia-collector than the FBI? Billions of dollars for the Director's little hobby—in fact a rather sizable share of what's left over from the production and sale of instantly obsolete military hardware. Meanwhile, jobs, housing, education, health care, and freedom shrivel. A Secretary of HEW leaves with but one parting shot: *Beware of the welfare state* (which barely exists). Few officials warn about the *police state*. If we are bemused as our cities rot, as pollution spreads through our waterways, as blight spreads across the countryside, it is a comfort to know that the beauty of Pennsylvania Ave. can always be enhanced. Consider the new block-size $126 million FBI building. TRB of the *New Republic* admonishes his readers to lower their voices when they pass "Big Brother's home." "He may have something on *you*." The new FBI citadel contains records of over 81 million Americans, with an annual flow of more than 7 million fingerprints pouring in from local and state police who more and more have their own secret squads. TRB makes it vivid:

> Suppose your name was in a telephone conversation monitored under court order by the FBI (or without court order under former Attorney General Mitchell); you may well have a red "C" card (cross-reference) in the index. The gray filing cabinets with six drawers bulge with three-by-five cards. There are some 58 million, with 1.3 million new ones coming in every year. There are 7,500 cabinets, growing at the rate of 300 a year. The electronic retrieval system is a marvel. Think of that huge building as a warehouse, wholesaling information on Americans.

We ought to do that. And we ought to think about the criteria by which names are assembled. Involvement in dissident politics is one. Here the overlap among agencies must be tremendous. Is that all? Not for the Secret Service, with its computerized "watch list" of people considered dangerous to the President—which once grew to 500,000 but has supposedly been trimmed down to a mere 47,000. The Secret Service acknowledges that much more than politics is involved. Thus Assistant Treasury Secretary David R. MacDonald recently told a House subcommittee that "mental instability and failure in work and in personal relationships" were also taken into account. By such criteria, which of us is immune?

If the psychologically and occupationally unstable but apolitical population is vulnerable, what of those who are not simply imperfect but political as well? A spokesman for the American Indian Movement

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said to a *Washington Post* reporter that the organization's former chief security officer was a paid FBI informant. Several clergymen who have mediated Indian/government disputes also claim that AIM has been infiltrated by FBI agents. "The FBI would neither confirm nor deny the charges," and a Douglas Durham, "the alleged informant," could not be reached for comment. Mr. Durham is accused, *inter alia*, of telling the Justice Department details of the legal defense prepared for Indians arrested at various demonstrations. Well, Indians are notoriously unstable. So are convicts. (Only Chileans and other foreigners need to be destabilized.) Hence, a front-page story in the *Times* begins:

> A 26-year old Buffalo woman said yesterday that she had infiltrated the Attica defense camp and reported back to the Federal Bureau of Investigation on legal strategy surrounding the trials of former inmates under indictment for crimes stemming from the Attica revolt.

The woman, Mary Jo Cook, explained, "I have a big mouth—I said a lot," (to her "control agent") about "some Attica defendants" and the jury selection project on which their lawyers were working. Ten days later Miss Cook repeated her story under oath, adding that Gary Lash was her control agent. Mary Jo Cooper evidently does not subscribe to the general proposition that decency is an idea whose time has come and gone. Unlike the more exalted criminals in our midst, she was capable of this outburst:

> I took the FBI job on, thinking it was honorable. During the course of it, I realized it was not honorable. I committed a political crime. It was as if I was a TV monitor into people's lives. I can't believe I destroyed people's rights to privacy.

Hirelings sometimes feel that way. Only those at the top and the sycophants who surround them could lie their way nervelessly through a polygraph test. They are psychopaths in the strictest sense: men without a superego to check or a conscience to prick them.

Hear Clarence M. Kelley, celebrating the completion of his second year as FBI director, dilating on 30 years of national security break-ins and burglaries, known privately as blackjack jobs and publicly as "surreptitious entries" that, having been disclosed, are no longer "a viable procedure." Director Kelley finds that "in light of changing standards of law enforcement conduct," J. Edgar Hoover terminated certain "imprudent" counterintelligence practices. But the FBI still keeps tabs on the personal behavior of reporters and government officials, including members of Congress. "Some of this [material] might well be helpful in later investigations." Kelley refused to call continued collection "rank abuse." Anyway, less than rank abuse is for others. "I have not reviewed files to find out about reporters, Congressmen or other public figures," and "I do not subscribe to that type of thing." Director Kelley simply perpetuates it.

Why the scruple about not subscribing to that type of thing in which he finds "no gross abuse of authority," no "corruption of the trust that was placed in us?" Kelley insists that no *illegal* activities ever occurred in his bureau and that they have been discontinued. The Director's logic is as unassailable as his moral sense, which has been surpassed of late only by Jerry Ford. Our leader, upon careful study of the CIA report and the addendum on assassinations for his eyes only, asserted twice and thrice that he would make no judgment about it. Let the historians make a judgment, and let Congress use discretion.

This from Mr. Ford who if he had a clever Machiavellian on his staff would be best advised as follows: Jerry, stop chewing that gum for a minute, put a WIN cap or a helmet on your head, take a passel of journalists out to the Rose Garden and try to read this statement: "Upon due reflection, I have found it possible to make a judgment about the CIA, and ladies and gentlemen, that judgment is negative. The CIA has been compromised. Citizens are cynical about an intelligence organization that plotted, bugged, tapped, stole, killed, fought secret wars, overthrew democratic governments, installed dictators, blundered and lied. Accordingly, I hereby abolish the CIA."

Why not? With that heroic gesture, Mr. Ford, yet another amiable man of limited educability, might even clinch his first victory outside Grand Rapids. With that gesture, he would banish the doubt that has been overconcentrated on a single segment of the bureaucratic brontosaurus that envelops us.

WHO NEEDS the CIA? Voters are agitated about it. They can have the DIA. That would make the Pentagon happy. Military men who already manage an efficient spy-in-the-sky operation could bring it down to earth as a properly run war on restrictive mandates. And give the DIA the $86 million headquarters it wants. Congress has perversely balked at appropriating this paltry sum even though its members know that the DIA is housed in substandard facilities, and a former Air Force base is available for the new site.

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If the DIA is too cumbersome, many another *apparat* is in place. Tom Wicker points out that more than *50* federal agencies have some law enforcement function that may involve the protection of "security" by spying, prying, and snooping. To remain ideologically pure, a measure of decentralization might be in order. The cities are already doing their job but still short of perfection. We have Dick Daley to show the way. His flacks proclaim that he makes Chicago work. And the voters agree. Before Daley's latest and biggest election victory, his city (or its press) was agog with scandal about the Chicago police who infiltrated the local Urban League chapter and similarly subversive community organizations along with the State's Attorney's office, while keeping Father Hesburgh of Notre Dame under surveillance and compiling dossiers on newspapermen and politicians like Richard Newhouse, a black who had the gall to run against Daley in the Democratic primary. The mayoral contest boiled down to Daley versus a reluctant Republican, John J. Hoellen who received less than a quarter of the vote. A *Chicago Sun-Times* staff writer noted that: "While Hoellen denounced 'Daley and his Gestapo' and called the mayor 'a paranoid old man peeping in keyholes'," Daley and Police Superintendent James Rochford defended police intelligence as a legitimate weapon against possible terrorist tactics. Rochford said that "the intelligence work would continue." It will. The point is to do better, not to botch the job and to cover up the coverup with more finesse.

Or make it so you don't have to cover up. Decriminalize semitotalitarian police action that strict constitutionalists have foolishly defined as unlawful. To this end Senator Birch Bayh, that paragon of liberals, and Senator James O. Eastland, never previously associated with progressive politics, have helped reintroduce Nixon's old bill to recodify the criminal law. The press has spotted but hardly highlighted two vital provisions of their law-and-order meat axe. One would empower the government to wiretap without a court order anyone the President may consider a "danger to the structure" of government, and the other would make it more difficult to prosecute a public official engaged in illegal conduct with the "express permission" of the President. You think that sounds too much like the Imperial Presidency? All right. Local officials can administer the new and better law.

But do let's rid ourselves of the CIA. Unfortunately, some of its valuable records have been shredded and dumped, producing an ecological mess. But let the rest be salvaged. Operation Chaos generated quite a yield. Its computer index contains 300,000 names, including all those associated with Grove Press, Inc., which once published a book by the British double agent Kim Philby. Punch a button and you can find reviews of the X-rated film *I Am Curious Yellow*, which Grove had a hand in distributing. And 7,200 "personality files" and a thousand dossiers on U.S. organizations should not go to waste.

Nor should we lose the knowledge scientifically gathered on LSD, or other drugs, in addition to certain unnamed "harassment substances," electroshock, and radiation. Who were the "unsuspecting volunteers" (Ay, how the language is enriched!), those unwittingly courageous CIA employees who, like the Army's 1,500 subjects and HEW's 2,500, contributed so freely to scientific advancement? So far we know only of one LSD subject's suicide. Ten years for sure, maybe 20 years after Frank R. Olson, his mind suitably altered, leaped out of a Manhattan hotel-room window, the LSD experiments still continued. Isn't it a pity to have lost all the records of that program? 152 separate files down the drain by order of Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, a biochemist "personally involved" in the fatal experiment. We are informed that this little obliteration, which showed our doctors to be so much less obliging than the Nazi MDs who at least left their records intact, was carried out shortly after Richard Helms "ordered other unspecified records to be destroyed."

Nevertheless, too many facts will out; some seem laughable at first sight (a file on Ford) but maybe they're not so laughable after all; most are grisly (like Operation Phoenix: can there have been *20,000* political assassinations in Vietnam?) Was there complicity or worse in the murder of heads of state like Allende, Trujillo, Lumumba, and Diem? Were the computers unable to predict that this kind of thing could only invite retaliation?

HOW did it all come to pass? A platitudinous but not therefore inaccurate answer is that it was a product of the Cold War. No doubt. In the long run, however, a search for historical origins leads us into an infinite regress. The Cold War had its precedent in President Wilson's Red Raids and, for that matter, in the Alien and Sedition Acts. And they had their European sources. None can have equaled President Nixon's if only because of advanced technology at his disposal. And with all that, as the tapes make monotonously clear, Nixon felt nothing but outrage

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at the intelligence community, which was never sufficiently responsive to his criminal needs, his extralegal and unconstitutional demands. And that community has been notably inept. With poorly planned mendacity, inadequate containment of informers, clumsiness, imbecilities piled on third-rate burglaries, we seem to have gone semi-Czarist, raising more of a goofed-up Okhrana than a KGB. No wonder Nixon, yearning for a little efficiency, wanted something more like the KGB.

"Leaders with eyes and no nose, with a nose and no eyes, with brains and no soul—but all of them with ambitions above their stature and their abilities." So wrote an Israeli, Michael Chilewich, of his government. And his government, besieged as it is, hardly deserves a fraction of the opprobrium that, looking back on the "covert operations" of the last 20 years, we pour on ours. Still, that very opprobrium, the possibility of opposition, of alertness to abuse, of continuous crying out that fish stink, fish multiply and stink, is our great, remaining glory. Whoever despises it, constitutes a threat to our endangered species—whether by justifying the appalling record that has lightly been touched on here or by using that record for "leftist" or "rightist" contempt of democratic ways. □

Michael Harrington

ECONOMIC PLANNING—PROMISES & PITFALLS

There will be a marked increase in national economic planning and public ownership in the United States during the next five or so years. Such a prediction, one might suppose, should immediately call forth leftist hurrahs. But if we analyze some current proposals in the light of socialist ABCs, the matter comes to seem quite ambiguous, requiring a response considerably more complex than a cheer. The heart of the issue is, or should be, a matter of ancient wisdom—that the nationalization of an economic function is not progressive in and of itself but acquires its significance from the social forces that carry it out and the purposes they affect. There are two reasons for restating and reapplying this venerable and profound proposition in 1975: that it is often forgotten and that it is now relevant to some very practical politics.

The proposal made by the U.S. Railway Association at the end of July, calling for $2.5 billion in federal funds for what is in effect the nationalization of the rail roadbed and equipment in the Northeast, is a good case in point. This scheme is the result of the total failure of the private sector. The failure, in turn, is the consequence of a number of factors—the incompetence, and perhaps the criminality, of management; the unplanned nature of federal planning, which permitted the overwhelming bulk of post-World War II transportation subsidies to go to trucks and planes while the most efficient system in the land was destroyed; and so on. But whatever the details of the disaster, its imperatives are clear enough. The government is going to have to step in, and massively.

Similar conditions exist in all, or part of, the health services sector, energy, communications (the Post Office), New York City, and the capital markets. As a result, there are going to be many more overt "planners' choices" in America during the next period.* Washington will end up with a whole series of new responsibilities for economic management, even if under the aegis of what seems to be the Second Coming of Calvin Coolidge, Gerald Ford.

This is why the classic socialist ABCs about nationalization are once more so very apropos. Permit me to add just a detail or so to what has been said about them. From Bismarck (or perhaps even Napoleon III) on, it has been clear that capitalist governments can utilize public ownership as a means of propping up and rationalizing the *status*

*In much of the mainstream literature "planner's choices" are counterposed to "consumer's choices," which suggests that sovereign buyers once instructed obedient corporations to fill their individual needs, an idyll which is said to be coming to an end. In these pages I need not belabor the fact that this mythic past of free men and free markets never existed. A system in which oligopolies imposed their profit-maximizing and hidden agenda upon the nation with the cooperation of the government has now turned out so badly that the very same parties are forced to propose a new public agenda in order to carry out their old purposes. Let us hope that under such circumstances the public may just be able to seize democratic control of the public agency.

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quo. This point took on a sad new vitality when the Russians demonstrated that it is even possible to nationalize an entire economy and wind up with a totalitarian, conservative, and class-ridden structure; it received further, and unfortunate, confirmation right after World War II when a significant number of West European nationalizations (and even an expropriation or two) helped modernize and strengthen capitalist society on the continent. So the crucial criterion with which to evaluate the emergent American *dirigisme* is the social content of the planning and ownership that are being urged. Simply put, who will make the planner's choices, and how?

This is not a hypothetical question, for it touches upon a series of proposals now before the Congress. First, there is the U.S. Railway Association plan of late July. It essentially suggests that the nation cope with the bankruptcy of the Northeastern railroads by taking ownership of the resources that the private sector has already run into the ground (roadbeds, equipment), while leaving profitable functions in private hands. Not so coincidentally, service will be curtailed to areas where it is "uneconomic," thus further accentuating the decay of the less fortunate regions of the Northeast. (For a number of reasons—economic, political, and social—the decisive centers of capitalist power in America may have decided to sacrifice this entire region and move the economic center of gravity to the Southwest.)

A similar pattern is emerging with regard to the Post Office. The private sector now is skimming off the lucrative parts of this activity—United Parcel Service, for example—leaving the public sector to subsidize magazines, deliver junk mail, and raise rates in the name of an impossible (under these conditions) goal of self-sufficiency. So also with the main alternatives to the Kennedy-Corman health security bill. In Nixon's proposal (and certainly in any rewriting of it that Gerald Ford may make), in the Ribicoff-Long bill, and in other conservative schemes, the private health insurance industry will, in effect, be guaranteed a huge profit at the taxpayer's expense. This would constitute a grateful nation's reward to companies that have actively encouraged the inflation in health costs in the recent past. In energy development, a number of projects would have Washington pay the cost of perfecting new technologies and making them commercially feasible, while the corporate sector would then be given all the benefits.

SO THE FIRST contemporary point to be made about public ownership is that socialists, democratic leftists, or anyone who objects to being ripped off should oppose it when it takes the form of simply socializing the losses of a given economic function and privatizing the profits. Positively, the counterproposal should urge that the entire function be nationalized—that all of the railroads be taken over, for example, or that health care be financed publicly, through income tax revenues, and not by means of a private, corporate intermediary.

Second, the integrated public ownership of an economic function should allow for a rational policy of national subsidies. If the mail were operated on a straight commercial calculus, then rural delivery would either be abolished, curtailed, or charged at an impossible rate. In this area, the United States should behave like every other industrial democracy and, in the name of national social policies, subsidize such services (and, like the other industrial democracies, pay for them out of the profitable operations in a nationally owned communications sector). Similarly with railroads. If there were overall national transportation planning, with a conscious and democratic choice of the best "mix" among highways, railroads, planes, waterways, and the like, then commercially unprofitable but socially useful activities could be underwritten from the profits of the system as a whole.

The exact wrong way to proceed in these matters is the one the nation has adopted, i.e., to determine the subsidies by a political battle among private corporate interests as to which shall dominate the unplanned plan implicit in federal handouts. It was this system that permitted Washington to subsidize trucking and airlines while letting the railroads, the most energy-saving and environmentally benign form of transportation, go to wrack and ruin. There is, however, a danger in the method urged here. Subsidies that violate the capitalist calculus are necessary if the society is to be humane, of course. But they must be made consciously, with a full and precise understanding of their cost. That tired cliché of contemporary academic economics—that there is an interest rate on money so long as scarcity persists—usually confuses interest rate as a technical tool for estimating costs, and the interest rate as an economic phenomenon under capitalism, which channels billions to a parasitic class. One fights to abolish interest (and unearned income of every sort) in that second sense; but one will also want to use the concept, for unusurious purposes under transformed circumstances, in that first sense. The point is not to have profligate and/or pernicious subsidies,

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which is a hallmark of the present system despite its prattle about efficiency, but to have conscious and democratic subsidies. That requires a much more rigorous and accurate accounting system than the one that business constructs out of mirrors.

Third, when dealing with the possibilities of public ownership as they are currently posed, it is necessary to have a very strong sense of the limitations of what can be achieved. It is impossible to nationalize a whole advanced economy overnight. At best, that would amount to conferring federal power on the existing private technostructure, which would not have its current values and policies transformed in the process; at worst, it would be chaotic. Therefore one is dealing with the extremely complex problem of establishing public property within an economy that is still basically dominated by private corporations. We know from the European experience that this can mean a nationalized enterprise that acts as unconscionably as a capitalist company. Even the Tennessee Valley Authority, which in many other respects is a model of public ownership, has acted irresponsibly toward the environment, encouraging the strip-mining of coal in Appalachia. There is a tendency, then, for islands of social property in a bourgeois sea to sink beneath the waves. This can be resisted, to be sure, but one of the weapons in that struggle is precisely a very chastened sense of how hard and inevitable that fight is going to be.

Take the specific case of energy. At the height of the gas shortage in the winter of 1973–74, there were liberals and trade unionists who seemed to think that the most "Left" position was to advocate nationalizing the oil industry, lock, stock, and barrel. Had that been done—and there was never the least political possibility that it could be—the present management of those multinationals, with all their political power in the Congress, would have been given a public-interest license to carry out their private-interest policies. They would continue to adhere to the latter, in part out of habit, and in part because their newly nationalized industry would exist within the still corporate web of the American economy.

This reasoning has led me to favor Senator Stevenson's much more modest suggestion: the creation of one federal oil and gas corporation. In advocating this course, I was quite aware of Stevenson's own conservative rationale for his bill and I had no illusions that, in the unlikely event that it passed, it would change much of the energy power structure. But it would provide an arena—a single company—in which the fight for democratic and social control would not have been lost before it began, as in the case of an entire industry.

It could provide a training school for those forces that could eventually participate in a democratic socialization of the entire industry, a move that is as necessary in the long run as it is premature in the short run.

But then, the phrase "democratic socialization," too, describes an extremely difficult and complex task. It is obvious that if nationalization—of a company or an industry—is not to be merely a bureaucratic act that might inadvertently lay the basis for corporate collectivism, there must be democratic structural safeguards built into the public enterprise itself. That, however, is more easily said than done. Certainly, there should be provisions for employee and public representation on the board of directors (an idea put forward by the rail unions when they fought for national ownership of their industry right after World War I). But how can one be sure that these good intentions would be turned into reality? The Weimar Constitution guaranteed the right of workers' councils, but nothing was done to bring them about.

The French experience with indicative planning is instructive on this count. The mechanism for developing the Plan provides for worker representation. But the French unions, which are not as institutionally solid as their American counterparts, simply do not have the expertise to take advantage of this juridical right. Therefore they often fail to occupy the seats reserved for them. Management, on the other hand, is able to hire platoons of technicians and thus to make real gains from what effectively thereby becomes a publicly subsidized system of market research for private, corporate use.

So it is not enough to provide legal rights. If the charter of a nationalized rail corporation says that workers' representatives must be on the board of directors, it must provide those representatives with research funds so that they can speak with management on something like an equal basis. And if the representation system itself is to be something more than a formality, there has to be a lot more thought and experiment on how to create a situation in which the workers will actually want to exercise their powers at the base. (My own guess is that such participation will be achieved if it is palpably related to immediate questions of wages and working conditions, which already command the attention, and indeed the passionate interest, of the workers.)

The coming period, then, will challenge American socialists. No longer will they have the luxury of making the propagandistic arguments for public property. The breakdown of some of the most im-

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portant capitalist mechanisms now guarantee that there will be an increase in public (or quasipublic) property. The battle between "socialism" for the rich and socialism for the majority will be joined in the Congress and the White House. And now we will have to become expert in the "fine print" of nationalization, for it is there, in the details of exactly how this process will be carried out and by whom, that the decisive issues will be settled. □

Pat Watters

George Wallace — Persistent Presence

Southern state governments in the late 1950s and early 1960s underwent a breakdown of democracy as serious and dangerous as Watergate. The same terrible principle that motivated Watergate controlled most of the region's state houses. In reaction to the 1954 Supreme Court school desegregation decision, segregationists took over, and they perceived their enemies, blacks and whites who were for integration, as in a war. These enemies had to be destroyed by whatever means necessary, and there were to be no restraints, least of all the United States Constitution.

Those segregationist governors were a motley crew, ranging from dumb old Ross Barnett of Mississippi to roguish Marvin Griffin of Georgia. Some of them believed in what they were doing and were that small degree better than Nixon, who believed only in his own political ends and used the awesome power of his office, including war power, for nothing else.

Yet others did not believe in what they were doing, which is the most frightening thing about the candidcacy of the lone survivor in office of that terrible gang, George Corley Wallace. Like Nixon, he believes in one thing only—his own political purposes.

Wallace is noted for that monstrous piece of cynicism about the racial issue after being defeated the first time he ran for governor: a vow never to be "out-niggered" again. Yet intelligent people today debate over whether his recent backtracking on the issue is genuine. He never had any conviction about it to begin with, and so began backtracking when his national ambitions and the new voting strength of blacks in the South made it expedient.

The other segregationist governors fell by the wayside when it became clear that they could not preserve segregation and had lied when they claimed they could. Not so with Wallace. As Robert Sherrill pointed out in *Gothic Politics In the Deep South*, he did more for the cause of desegregation than any other Southerner. His defiance spurred passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. His grandstanding brought forth one landmark Federal Court decision after another.

But since his purposes were purely political—that is, manipulation of imagery in the Nixon fashion—he was able to make each defeat seem a victory, a symbol of his valor against insurmountable odds. The Kennedy administration allowed him to stage the scenario of standing in the schoolhouse door to block desegregation at the University of Alabama, a meaningless exercise except for its image-making value across the country. When a true believer like old Ross Barnett had been given the same opportunity at the University of Mississippi, things got out of hand and a murderous riot ensued. Now Mississippi is rid of Ross, and a man who passes for a moderate there is governor today. But Alabama is still saddled with Wallace and so, to its peril, is America.

WHAT IS HE UP TO this time? Still the same simple thing—running for office! He just loves to run. A compatriot likened it to alcoholism and so asked, "Will Wallace run? Is there going to be an election?"

Wallace is better organized now than he was in his third-party adventure of 1968 and in his attempt on the Democratic party in 1972. A mantle of saint-hood-by-association settled upon him when a lunatic tried to assassinate him in '72, and some of that strange sort of respectability still clings to him. And, the most frightening part of it, the kind of people he appeals to in the nation—malcontent poor whites, discontent lower-middle-class whites—are more numerous and in worse shape financially and psychologically. The middle class is demoralized and he is speaking to its frustrations, pointing out, with some correctness, that it is paying the freight for rich and poor alike.

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He is a threat as a spoiler. A Gallup Poll this spring showed 22 percent of the Democratic voters supporting him, the highest percentage among the scattering of candidates at that time. It is chilling to read serious assessments of his chances, and disgusting to see James Reston cap off an interview with him by praising his "great" spirit.

People in Alabama who are against him and watch him warily speak of him in that special hushed tone Southerners reserve for madmen and belligerent drunks: a mixture of pity and fear. Said one of them: "He's been sitting up there attacking anyone he wants to without fear of reprisal. Now he's beginning to undergo a little scrutiny."

The *New York Times* ran a comprehensive report of what the *Alabama Journal* has been pointing out to no avail for years—that during his years in office his "little people" in Alabama have gone from bad to worse according to all the indices, including health care, employment, and income, and have been carrying the most regressive tax rate in the nation. The *Times* also ran a detailed account of his dubious campaign financing, an arrangement whereby a direct-mail firm advances him the cost of mailings, sometimes at a loss. Government officials said this falls within a shadowy area of laws prohibiting corporate loans to candidates. Other periodicals, including *New York*, have hit at other aspects of his unsavory record, and the presumption is that the nation once more is warned against him.

But Alabama has been warned against him all these years and still he wins there, and still the rest of the white South, even though electing its own progressive state governments, seems fatally fascinated with him. He has a corner on all of America's racist and Far Right voters and presumably can count again on support from all those rag-tag rightist and racist organizations the Anti-Defamation League listed as behind him in 1968.

One of the Montgomery Wallace-watchers described how he can continue to hold them while making overtures to more sane elements of the electorate. "No one can ever convince a Klansman in Indiana that Wallace is liberal on race. The rabid ones around here got upset with him when those blacks endorsed him. But then they got to thinking about it and said, 'Old George really slicked 'em, didn't he?'"

We can see him full in the light of Watergate—a poseur, a liar, an image manipulator, a slickster indeed, the poor man's (God help us) Nixon. He is still the carrier of the poison of the segregationist-governor regimes that seeped into the nation's bloodstream and nearly killed it with Watergate. The toxin first appeared, interestingly, during the cold-war, anti-Communist witch hunts in which Nixon figured so prominently; and when the segregationist governors were declaring their ideological enemies as undeserving of human rights, they talked about "Commonists," too. Indeed, an integrationist was a Communist by definition, and worse things too. The power of state government was thrown against them, and Alabama was the best at doing that, with state troopers to bludgeon demonstrators time after time, with unconstitutional "laws" that had to be beaten down, with the South's largest investigative force to spy on and build dossiers against the enemy. Antipathy toward the press (among other democratic institutions) was part of all the segregationist regimes, and Wallace of course is noted for having carried it to the same extreme Nixon did. Dirty tricks? "People were shocked," said one Alabaman who was associated with Albert Brewer's unsuccessful race for governor against Wallace in 1970, "when all that came out about Nixon's dirty tricks. Shoot! You don't know anything about dirty tricks until you've run against George Wallace." They are not traceable directly to him. The Klan is said often to be the instrument of them. They included, when it appeared Brewer had a chance in the run-off, whispering campaigns against members of the candidate's family, dissemination of materials suggesting that Brewer's election would mean rule by blacks. "We assumed our phones were tapped," said the man who worked in the campaign, "and carried on conversations designed to mislead." He said that men would follow behind Brewer campaign appearances and ask people, "Did he have any blacks with him?" "Was he drinking?"

THE RECORD IS ALL THERE on Wallace and the story has been told again and again, including Marshall Frady's chilling book about him in 1968. (Frady's book contains an account of Wallace saying back then the same business about Americans having fought against the wrong side in World War II that so shocked a group of foreign journalists interviewing him this year. In Frady's account there is none of the torturous explanation that Wallace tried this time, after a reaction set in, that he meant the Allies never should have let Hitler take over. Another insight into his foreign-policy notions was his 1968 running-mate choice of Curtis LeMay, whose appetite for atomic war was soon discovered.)

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Words mean little to Wallace but everything to the rest of us. That is the sorriest part of his record. He postures. He lies. He scapegoats. He has no positive policies, only an inflammatory talent for vitriol.

I watched once at a rally where the crowd was fired up to hear him speak, where preliminary speakers like old Governor Barnett and shrill Lester Maddox had stirred the people with standard racist rhetoric. All of a sudden two black men with a white woman walked into the grandstand and the people there, Wallace's little people, white people of my South, attacked them, slamming metal folding chairs down on their heads, trying to kill them. The attackers were not Klansmen, not the fanatic haters at the fringe of all American society, but decent folk, gathered there on a Fourth of July in the trappings of patriotic, bunting-draped, American democracy, wanting their ever-neglected self-interest spoken to.

When time came for them to hear Wallace, he addressed himself entirely to the worst racist conditioning instilled in them by the Southern society that had betrayed them from birth, and he betrayed them there again, these people he calls his own.

They are my people, too. I grew up among them, have lived all my life amid them. I know their ordinary decency, their capacity for kindness and generosity, their inherent humanity, and their bravery. I had wept to see them turned into a cowardly, murderous mob, and then I listened, sickened, to that skilled language of vitriol that he speaks, conveying not conviction, only a hard glee in the attack.

Of the just-enacted Civil Rights Law: "It is an act of tyranny. It is the assassin's knife stuck in the back of liberty. . . ." And: "I do not call the members of the United States Supreme Court Communists. But . . . the chief, if not the only, beneficiaries of the present Court's rulings have been duly and lawfully convicted criminals, Communists, atheists, and clients of vociferous left-wing minority groups."

When the crowd, responding not just to the words but to the animosity in the man, threatened to get out of hand again, he calmed them with an impromptu homily about God loving everybody, regardless of race or creed. In his racial backtracking now he claims that he never opposed black people, merely resisted a big federal government "trying to run every detail of citizens' lives," and that may be technically true.

But just as the crowd responded at that rally in 1964, so whites across the South during the 1960s rampaged and murdered in response to their highest elected officials telling them that blacks were taking over under illegal laws promulgated by Communists. In Alabama, they blew up that black church, killing the four little Sunday School girls, shot to death a black voter-registration demonstrator in Marion, beat to death a white minister in Selma, shot to death a white woman demonstrator near there, shot to death a black demonstrator in Tuskegee, shot to death a white priest in Lowndes County.

THE RECORD of what he said and what his little people did during those sad, past years is all there. One could compile a list of all the repressive and inflammatory actions he took in the name of racism during those same years, the most notorious the onslaught by Alabama state troopers against the demonstrators in Selma. (He denies the reports that he directly ordered the attack.)

It is all there in the record. And there is the parallel with Nixon. Yet after all we learned from Watergate, we—the press, other politicians, the public generally—treat him as though he were "just another politician." Why can't we find within ourselves the sureness to cry, enough! Get out! We want no part of you. You are unfit.

It is taken as a mark of absolution for him that some black politicians, no more principled than some white ones, endorse him. And the most dangerous tendency on the American Left is to listen wistfully to his spouting of the language of populism, and to seek in such a man, for whom the words mean no more than his racism did, the will o' the wisp of "working-class solidarity," to think they can do business with him.

In the South of the 1940s and early 1950s, progressive people tried to avoid the race issue, bent their will against its being raised in politics for fear of how viciously the white voters might vent their racism. That same fear grips the nation now; race, more clearly than ever before, is indeed the American dilemma. But, as Myrdal pointed out, had Southern progressives raised the race issue, attempted to lead their people out of racism's deadly clutch, they might have prevailed. Instead the South got the segregationist governors and the nation its infusion of poison from them.

George Wallace got where he is in politics by an unprincipled, demagogic manipulation of the South's anguished struggle with racism. He was almost cut down by the kind of objectless, random murderousness that his speeches inspire. Some in

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Alabama say that the encounter with that blood-lust in which he has ever trafficked has taken some of the sting out of him, some of the cruel energy, and that this is the best hope he won't do well this time.

A better hope is that America may find within itself the strength and decency to reject him because of what he is, to raise the record of his racist demagoguery against him, get rid of him with the same finality with which it got rid of Joseph McCarthy, and in the process get a bit more of its soul back. □

H. Brand

The Problem of Full Employment

> The central employment problem of our society today is the disparity of employment opportunities among blacks and whites, among skilled and unskilled, among young and experienced. — OTTO ECKSTEIN[1]

Twenty-nine years after the Employment Act was signed into law, a new bill titled the "Equal Opportunities and Full Employment Act" has been introduced by Congressman Augustus Hawkins. Unlike its predecessor of 1946, it codifies the right of individual jobseekers to useful work at fair pay and mandates the creation of full employment through the federal government. The bill was largely conceived in the early 1970s when unemployment, while high by the norms of other industrial countries, stood at less than half of current levels. Its authors did not intend to address the problems of incipient mass unemployment; they attempted to deal with what had become permanently high unemployment in otherwise prosperous times.

Instability of employment had become the perennial lot of minority workers and youths, and withdrawal from the labor market among men in the prime of life was increasing. The situation was aggravated by a complacent acceptance of target unemployment rates set ever higher—4 percent, then 4.5 percent, then 5 percent and more of the labor force—to constrain wage bargains and resist inflation. The Hawkins bill represents a reaction against the link between unemployment and inflation upon which most economists and policymakers have insisted.

A critique of the Hawkins bill is offered below. But let it be said at the outset that, were it to pass, it would rival in scope such landmarks as the Wagner Labor Relations Act, which established the right of workers to bargain collectively, or the Fair Labor Standards Act, which set floors under wages and hours. Like these laws, the Hawkins bill would further limit the power of capital and the reach of business-dominated government policy. Yet, the bill lacks the boldness of creating new instrumentalities, new bodies to generate productive employment, and it basically works within the framework of the existing division of public and private economic sectors. Such flaws will seriously threaten its objectives, if it ever passes.

THE 1946 EMPLOYMENT ACT represented an emasculated version of the 1945 Full Employment Act, passed by the Senate but rejected by the House. At best the 1946 Act, in the words of Alvin Hansen, undertook "a federal responsibility for the problem of employment," aimed to achieve a "condition in which job opportunities were available."[2] Unlike the Senate bill, the Act did not give clear priority either to full or to "maximum" employment (the term it uses) over other goals; nor did it recognize any "right" to a job, nor create planning instruments to attain and maintain high employment levels other than to call for an annual economic report and to set up the Council of Economic Advisers and the Joint Economic Committee of Congress. It did not authorize the federal government to formulate specific production goals as part of a production and employment budget, as in effect the Senate bill had done. It stressed "free enterprise" as the framework within which the level and composition of employment would be determined. It eschewed any explicit commitment to "full" employment. Politically, it represented "neither an impasse nor a compromise; it was a clear-cut victory for the conservative bloc."[3] Its declaration of purpose and weak provisions for implementation reflected the presumed need for a work force disciplined by some degree of job *in*security.

The lack of a legal mandate to maintain full employment has not meant, until recently, that

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large-scale unemployment would be a danger. The mass unemployment of the '30s not only traumatized those directly affected; it also shook the central institutions of capitalist democracy to their foundations. At the end of World War II, a broad consensus existed to use fiscal policy in order to stabilize the economy at high employment, although this consensus was conditioned by the efficacy of fiscal policy as a neutral, noninterventionist instrument.[4]

Furthermore, the Cold War with the Soviet Union required a high-growth economy, able to digest large budgets to meet "external challenges"—a costly conventional and nuclear warfare capability, a vast space exploration program, generous foreign aid, expensive research projects. Such expenditures, together with their multiplier effects, generated high employment levels. One of the factors in the apparent unwillingness to stem the rise in unemployment since the fall of 1974 has been a lessened sense of economic and ideological competition with the Soviet Union; and perhaps also a changed conception of economic leadership, related to the rise of repressive state-capitalist regimes in key developing countries.

The absence of a full-employment mandate has meant that unemployment could be used as a regulator of the economy's wage and price structure; and so in fact it has been used. At various times during the post-World War II era, unemployment was deliberately fostered (or was permitted to increase) as a way to exert pressure on wage claims.[5] Since 1949, the unemployment rate dropped below 4 percent only during the Korean and the Vietnam wars; in most nonwar years it exceeded 5 percent. The rate for blacks and other minority workers usually ran twice as high. These rates, furthermore, are understated, since many workers withdraw from the labor force when job opportunities become scarce.[6]

Yet the use of unemployment as a wage-price regulator has been decreasingly successful. The statistical and econometric relations between changes in unemployment and changes in wages and prices have proved to be abstraction rather than faithful reflection of reality. The assumptions underlying these policies—wages and prices being set by the interplay of market forces susceptible to the leverage of centrally managed financial flows—have also proved to be illusory. Developments during the current depression, although not traceable to the intent of policymakers and largely out of their control, demonstrate this point: wage rates in the automobile industry, for example, have remained unaffected by the near-30-percent unemployment experienced in the industry. Industrial prices have held up and have risen in many instances, despite capacity utilization rates of less than 70 percent.[7] These are indications—and there are others—of the fundamental bankruptcy of fiscal policy as conceived in the '40s. The employment problem is reasserting itself.

THE HAWKINS BILL explicitly separates employment policy from policies designed to prevent or mitigate inflation. The acceptance of the right to remunerative work and the provisions for enforcing this right effectuate the separation. This is the central issue presented by the bill: *can such a right be granted, better, can it be effective in capitalist society; and if granted, what would be the probable circumstances of its exercise*?

The first part of the question cannot be answered in the abstract. Most measures ameliorating the conditions of workers have been thought by radicals and others to be incompatible with capitalism at one time or another; yet they were adopted as a result of political struggles and pressures. The political context within which such ameliorative measures work may end up harming their beneficiaries—it makes a great difference whether nursing homes for the aged are run by community groups or for private profit.

A critical point may indeed be reached beyond which social-policy measures either cause capitalist institutions to decay or they may arouse forcible resistance among their supporters. There is much in the current economic literature, as well as in "conservative" thought, that indicates the emergence of such resistance; we cannot pursue the subject here. The limits to which capitalist institutions and interests can adapt themselves to new political pressures or social-policy measures depend on specific contexts, and at best are hard to predict.

The second part of the question will be discussed here in relation to the key provisions of the Hawkins bill. The provisions include a National Purposes Budget, setting forth the full-employment goals appropriate to the number of persons able and willing to work and looking for a job. The unemployment rate is to be reduced to 3 percent within 18 months of the bill's passage, and to less than that thereafter. The National Purposes Budget is meant to represent the framework for the President's legislative and budgetary proposals, and to project policies and programs to meet "national priorities" consistent with the attainment of full employment. The bill lists 19 areas for which such projections are to be made—e.g., housing construction, adequate health services, educational facilities, etc. The bill would

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continue the Council of Economic Advisers, and would set up various additional bodies charged with research into employment and related problems.

The provisions described so far would enlarge the federal government's reporting functions and tie the federal budget to specific goals. Full-employment policies would be mandatory upon the government, and they would have to be pursued within a framework of national goals. But the bill does not prescribe formal authority to allocate resources between public and private uses.

Perhaps the bill's authors believe that fiscal and monetary policies, together with expenditure policies, can accomplish the required allocations without unduly interferring with the private sector; perhaps they deliberately avoided the problem. At any rate, the experience of the postwar period does not sustain their implicit assumption that fiscal and expenditure policies suffice for the magnitude of resource allocation contemplated in the bill. At the least, close government control over the channeling of credit would be necessary, and probably also the creation of large "yardstick" enterprises. But the bill does not provide for this kind of implementation.

THE HEART of the Hawkins bill lies in its provision for a Job Guarantee Office, charged with finding "useful and rewarding employment for any American, able and willing to work but not yet working [and] unable otherwise to obtain work ...." To carry out this task, the agency would, in addition to using the conventional channels of the U.S. Employment Service, place jobseekers in public service employment projects (which may be run by public or private contractors); as well as register them in a "Standby Job Corps," also to be formed under the bill.

The Standby Job Corps, whose members would be assigned "temporary residual public service jobs,"[8] secures the job guarantee as part of the bill.

The rationale for the public service employment to be created under the Hawkins bill is to provide useful and steady employment for the growing number of persons who find it increasingly difficult to obtain a job; or, in better times, to hold one. It is easy to identify the groups who experience such difficulties by their high unemployment rates, even though these rates tend to understate the dimensions of the problem. They consist of the semiskilled and the unskilled, who made up close to one-third of all the unemployed in 1974 although they accounted for only about one-fifth of the labor force. Since blacks and other minority workers are much more likely than white workers to fill semiskilled and unskilled jobs—56 percent. vs. 32 percent—they are also more liable to the instability inherent in such jobs.

The reasons why unemployment is so high among these groups, or why male labor-force participation among them has been declining, cannot be detailed here. One of the more plausible assumptions is that many persons who have low skills, little education, and are victimized by labor-market discrimination are forced to accept dead-end jobs at low pay. "High unemployment among men and women in this 'secondary labor market' in part reflects their rejection of the jobs that are available. Many of those with very limited job opportunities prefer to remain unemployed rather than accept what they consider undesirable jobs. Many others who take these jobs soon quit."[9] Yet, why and how such "undesirable" jobs are generated is a more basic question than why people, while forced time and again to take them, often give them up.

Members of these groups are the ones most likely to apply for public service employment created under the Hawkins bill, and to invoke the bill's job guarantee provisions. This raises large questions, such as the probability that public service employment will perpetuate the low status and even the personal instability of these workers, unless substantial investments are made to upgrade them as part of structured public service careers. The bill would provide for compensation of public service workers, not less than the minimum wage, "that bears a positive relationship to their qualifications, experience, and training; and ... that is such that will effectively encourage them ... to advance from the Corps to other employment."[10] This language indicates that the job guarantee part of the bill would leave unchanged the status of the worker most likely to take advantage of it, unless he is able to move up on his own. The Standby Job Corps would in effect become a type of "secondary labor market" for public service employment.

The reasons job-guarantee provisions of the Hawkins bill are so weak may be found in the economic environment within which the bill was conceived. *Good* public service jobs, available to all who seek them, would obviously reduce the available supply of casual or short-term or otherwise low-paid workers, compelling firms that employ such workers to improve working conditions. Thus a job guarantee of relatively good public service jobs would significantly raise the labor costs of

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many private businesses. The persistent opposition by employer representatives to increases in the minimum wage and its coverage, and the inordinate delays in adjusting the minimum wage to changes in the cost of living or to general wage movements, foreshadow the fierce opposition that a legislated job guarantee would encounter. Such industries as retail trade, finance and insurance, and services are heavily dependent on low-paid workers; so to a lesser but still significant extent is manufacturing. For example, 51 percent of all retail workers had earnings definable as "low" in 1970—less than $2 an hour.[11] In the South, more than one-third of all nonsupervisory workers earned less than $2 an hour. Altogether, 25 percent of all nonsupervisory workers earned less than that rate at the time. Hourly earnings, including the "low" standard used here, have risen since 1970, but the relation among earnings rates is unlikely to have changed significantly. No job guarantee of public service employment is likely to be devised that fails to take account of the low-wage structures generated by business interests.

This is implicit not only in the language of the Hawkins bill but also follows from recent discussions of public employment by students of the subject. For example, Robert I. Lerman, formerly on the staff of the Joint Economic Committee's Subcommittee on Fiscal Policy, cites evidence, admittedly fragmentary, that the relatively high rates of pay offered under existing public employment programs tend to screen out disadvantaged unemployed workers.[12] Lerman has proposed the creation of a program of guaranteed public employment supplemented by wage subsidies to workers in low-paid private jobs, structured so as not to encourage these private-sector workers to quit in order to take a public job. The hourly rate for a public service job would be $2.30; the subsidy would be paid to workers earning between $1.80 and $3 per hour.[13] The worker in the private sector would always be somewhat better off than the public service worker.

The details and conditions of Lerman's proposal do not concern us here, but the magnitude of the illustrative wage rates involved indicates the penuriousness of what is likely to be the compensation in guaranteed public service jobs. Considering also the kind of work that public service workers are likely to perform,[14] carefully designed as it would be so as not to compete with work either in private enterprise or in public agencies, one is impelled to conclude that the social and economic position of disadvantaged workers will change little under a job guarantee program—for reasons, however, that have less to do with the program as such than with the kind of economy within which it must operate.

IT IS CONCEIVABLE that the job guarantee and public service provisions of the Hawkins bill will lose in importance as the full-employment policy to be pursued leads to a rising demand for workers. In such a situation, "secondary labor markets" would contract.[15] It should be noted, however, that in all countries where private property has remained part of the legal foundation of the economy, and the mobility of finance capital is more or less unrestricted, conditions of full or near-full employment have not prevented the emergence of dual (i.e., "secondary") labor markets; nor the import of foreign labor to serve these "markets," or their export in times of recession[16]; nor the movements of legal and illegal aliens (the restriction of the job guarantee to American citizens would expand the "secondary labor market" job opportunities of aliens). The dominant force in the shaping of labor markets remains capital, and this has been all the more true since World War II, when fiscal policy in most Western countries essentially succored private markets and investment.

The Hawkins bill, were it to pass, would unquestionably strengthen the forces of social planning in the United States, and would measurably improve the situation of working people. It therefore deserves support. The fact, however, that the bill carefully delimits the area of public service employment, confining it to the usual array of "unmet" societal needs, and offers what appears to be a deliberately weak job guarantee, betrays its essential flaw. Public employment can be a most effective way of creating jobs. But the idea, facetiously voiced but seriously meant, that it is sufficient for public service employees to dig holes and fill them again, so long as their pay generates income flows for high consumption levels, merely underlines the need, typical in late-capitalist society, of wasting resources, including the energies and abilities of human beings.

Public employment should first of all be productive employment, part of developmental projects, large and small—in rail transport, urban construction, small car manufacture, river valley improvement, food marketing cooperatives, and so on. It should become a "commanding height" of the economy, an integral part of its infrastructure.

Such a public employment program would be unacceptable to most business spokesman, and

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would probably be opposed on ideological grounds by large sections of America's middle class. Yet, it is likely that an audacious public employment scheme is indispensable, first in order to overcome labor market dualism—the essence of which is stated by Otto Eckstein in the introductory quote; and second to sustain—not merely attain—full employment. In these respects, however, the forces dominating the U.S. economy have exercised a tacit but potent constraint upon the bill, rendering it virtually inoffensive to their larger interests.

July 1975

Notes

1. *American Economic Review*, May 1969, p. 142.

2. Alvin H. Hansen, *Economic Policy and Full Employment* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1947), p. 107, 108.

3. Russell A. Nixon, "The Historical Development of the Conception and Implementation of Full Employment as Economic Policy," in *Public Service Employment, an Analysis of Its History, Problems and Prospects* (New York: Praeger, 1973), p. 27.

4. Herbert Stein, *The Fiscal Revolution in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 196 and 197 ff. Stein's remains the indispensable major work on the evolution of fiscal policy in the U.S.

5. See Eugene Keller, "Social Priorities, Economic Policy, and the State" in *The Seventies: Problems and Proposals*, Irving Howe and Michael Harrington, eds. (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 107 ff.

6. See C. G. Gellner, "Enlarging the Concept of a Labor Reserve," *Monthly Labor Review*, April 1975, pp. 20 ff.

7. While the rate of inflation has substantially abated, the rate of increase in industrial commodity prices still ran at an annual rate of 3.4 percent over the six months ending in May 1975; over the three months preceding May, it ran at an annual rate of 1.5 percent.

8. Section 6a of the bill.

9. Martin S. Feldstein, *Lowering the Permanent Rate of Unemployment*, a study prepared for the use of the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the U.S. September 18, 1973, p. 32. For an elaboration of the theory of secondary labor markets, see Peter B. Doeringer and Michael J. Piore, *Internal Labor Markets and Manpower Analysis* (Lexington, Mass: Heath, 1971).

10. Section 6(b)(2)B of bill.

11. S. Sternlieb and A. Bauman, "Employment Characteristics of Low-Wage Workers," *Monthly Labor Review*, July 1972, pp. 9 ff.

12. See Robert I. Lerman, "The Public Employment Bandwagon Takes the Wrong Road," *Challenge*, January–February 1975, p. 14.

13. See Robert I. Lerman, "JOIN: A Jobs and Income Program for American Families," in *Studies in Public Welfare. Paper No. 19. Public Employment and Wage Subsidies*, a Volume of Studies prepared for the Use of the Subcommittee on Fiscal Policy of the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the U.S., Dec. 30, 1974, pp. 20–22.

14. Lerman lists projects performed under the Canadian Local Initiatives Program (LIP), a public service employment scheme, as follows: building local community halls in rural areas; providing sheltered workshops for disabled persons; teaching handicapped persons to refinish furniture and to make clothing and needle-point tapestries; repairing appliances for indigent people and helping them move; providing recreational activities for children; and more. *Ibid.*, pp. 33–34.

15. "We know that as we speed up the economy, employers begin to change their hiring standards; they begin to open up all kinds of job opportunities to groups that were previously excluded; that additional training and upgrading occurs; that certification and discriminatory exclusion begin to fall away in the labor market under pressure of staffing in the primary sector." Peter Doeringer, "The Implications of Full Employment Policy for the Secondary Labor Market," in *A Full Employment Policy for America*, A Symposium at UCLA, October 13, 1973, Paul Bullock, ed. (University of California, L.A.: Manpower Research Center, Institute of Industrial Relations), p. 30.

16. The concept of labor market dualism and its development by Doeringer and Piore represents a very useful and innovative approach to the employment problems of disadvantaged workers, as well as to the practices of employers in "primary" labor markets. But the presentation of the concept by the authors and their adherents lacks historical dimension. It cannot explain how and why secondary labor markets arise and disappear, or how primary labor markets turn into secondary ones; or the manner in which the emergence and decline of secondary labor markets has been intertwined with the evolution of industrial capitalism. See E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966). See also George Myers, "Migration and the Labor Force," *Monthly Labor Review*, September 1974. □

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Bernard Crick

Letter from London: England Still Stands—Mostly

First, we are still here. "A prophet," said Mr. Dooley, "is a man who foresees trouble." But when trouble comes, I would add, it can still look remarkably like yesterday. The land swarms with prophets of doom. "Repent-for-the-Last-Hour-Is-at-Hand" men lie exhausted on every sidewalk or pavement. The Rosicrucians hope that finally the bishops will open Joanna Southcott's sealed boxes—if they have not lost them centuries ago. Half the *Tribune* group suddenly becomes converted to belief in the existence and iniquity of inflation and the other half cries "Ha Ha among the trumpets" that the walls of capitalism are at last collapsing—again—and that revolution will come without really trying.

But there will be time for a good many more such David Savarine television shows and magazine special reports on the final end of Great Britain. Like many a final, farewell performance, it threatens to be a spring-and-summer twice-yearly event. Like Charles II, we should apologize to those around the bed for being "such an unconscionable time a-dying." Indeed, but such is life. If this is social breakdown, it is a bit hard to recognize. If, to reflective realists, the crisis is on us, to the ordinary man in the street it is still hard to perceive. Even 30 percent inflation, while it rubs and worries, hasn't yet wounded deeply. No mass unemployment and even in areas of high unemployment, it simply cannot look as terrible as in the never-to-be-forgotten-by-the-labour-movement 1930s. The unemployment benefits are greater, the clothes are newish, the television set won't be pawned for a long time, nor the automobile or the washing machine, and the children go to school well shod and, if a little less *well* fed, yet certainly fed enough. We all know that we are approaching 1 million unemployed, but we know it because of statistical rhetoric, not from the eyes or the belly.

Pockets of acute deprivation, yes; unforgivable misery and squalor of a small number of homeless and destitute. But still each *a* social problem, not the problem itself: anomalies, relics from the past that stubbornly evade and avoid the rules of the welfare state, but not a tendency of the future. Alcoholism and tranquilizer-drug addiction are high, but they are sicknesses of an urban capitalist civilization, not a sign that the walls have broken down, whether for good or ill.

Hard indeed, looking at London, to think that there is an economic war on. My American and German visitors are still much impressed by the number of Rolls Royces on the streets, and they do not each carry a plaque saying "Saved by the State." But it should be equally noticeable that 30 percent of the cars purchased in Britain last year were made abroad—so great is the public's trust in the standards of British industry. Restaurant prices have shot up, almost 100 percent over two years, which no longer makes London the cheapest eating place in the Western World—though still the best, in the sense of the variety of national cuisine obtainable (whereas, after all, the French are still very French and the Germans very German). But theaters are still very cheap by New York standards—$10 for a very good seat at Covent Garden, $5 at the National Theatre or the Aldwych (the Royal Shakespeare in London). London will still be the pleasantest assignment for the princes of American journalism writing their 48-hour stopover pieces on "Why X is Collapsing."

To any form of tourist, London is still London, and if crowds have been gathering in Downing Street in July and August for cabinet meetings, most of the crowd seem tourists, native and foreign. They clap rather indiscriminately. I had a pass for the Cabinet Office private car park, to give evidence one afternoon to the Privy Council Committee on Ministers' Memoirs (the Crossman Diaries affair); turned the corner into Downing Street, identified

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myself to the police and got a small round of applause from the crowd.

The crisis provides a lot of extra comings and goings for the tourists to eye through their camera shutters. Arrivals of trade union leaders at Downing Street are among the most popular with the crowd: they look such heavy, honest, sensible, stoor* and trustworthy men—just what a Labour government should look like. But Cabinet Ministers have to be known by sight to be identified. Otherwise most of them look so smooth and well-groomed as to be taken merely for top civil servants or leaders of industry. All quite a spectacle, what with the police in Downing Street and the Life Guards just around the corner in breastplates, gold and scarlet.

> We're not out to fight the foe
> Sing oh dear no,
> We're not out to fight the foe
> But just to put a little pepper
> In the Lord Mayor's show.

Perhaps this is the trouble. For even on last Christmas Day the Prime Minister had a passage written into the Queen's Message (it used to be called the Sovereign's "Message to the Empire") deploring "those gloom-mongers who talk our country down." Bless the BBC. They not merely had me on that list of gloom-mongers, but gave me a full five minutes the following lunchtime (following their doctrine of balance, presumably) to protest, like some old Whig, "at the intrusion of the Crown into politics." (I barked like John Adams reproving a Royal Governess.) For Mr. Wilson has been so determined to play it cool. Indeed, in the first week of July, he made a very relaxed speech warning against "creating a crisis out of fear," before canceling his engagements, dashing back to London, two emergency meetings of the Cabinet, and then the great reversal (under threat of a run on the pound) of the oft-sworn electoral oath never more to interfere with free industrial wage-bargaining.

You may remember better Cornwallis's drummers beating "The World Turned Upside Down" as they marched out of Yorktown in 1780 with colors furled; but we tend to remember better the abortive Walcheren expedition of 1796:

> Oh the noble Duke of York, he had ten thousand men
> He marched them up to the top of a hill
> And he marched them down again.
> And when they were up, they were up;
> And when they were down, they were down,
> And when they were only half way up,
> They were neither up nor down.

Now, of course, as King Harold swings his men round another 360 degrees, he assures them that the principle of free collective bargaining has not been interfered with. There will be no legal sanctions against the trade union brothers, as under the wicked Tories; or under his own two attempts to get a statutory incomes policy in his second (1966–70) Administration. No, the sanctions will be against the employers if they pay up any fruits of free negotiation higher than the flat rate of £6 a head, for the nonce, and whatever emerges from whatever brand-new machinery for wage negotiation is now hastily improvised.

A GREAT DEAL of British politics now turns on the character of Harold Wilson. I remember, now with an honest blush, writing the preelection "Why I Vote for Harold Wilson" piece in 1966 in the *Observer*. I described him as a man of "left-wing sentiments but with a sense of realism more often associated with the Right." By October 1970 I was writing an editorial in *Political Quarterly* saying, to the waves and the wild seashore, that he must go, unfit to remain Prime Minister, particularly on the evidence of his own pompous, egotistic, trivial, and dishonest huge volume of *Memoirs*. So I'm not entirely to be trusted in my judgment on this issue. As there are some who love him this side of idolatory (his political adviser, his press secretary, his personal secretary, a junior Minister called Arnold Kaufman, and about a dozen old cronies whom he's made lords, to be precise), there are others who—well perhaps blame him personally for more than social theory should attribute to any one man, whether Marx, Moses, or Mohammed. But two real theoretical points, one oblique, one direct.

- *Oblique theoretical point on Harold Wilson*: interesting that the *Observer* even in 1966 commissioned three "Why I vote for" Wilson, Heath, or Grimond personalities pieces, not on the parties. Talk, indeed, about personalization of politics in the American presidential manner! Actually, sheer trendyism on the *Observer's* part: for most people still vote overwhelmingly for the party, whether it is led by Jesus Christ or a donkey. Personality counts more in policy formation than in electoral appeal. And interesting that Wilson's *Memoirs* showed that

*Scottish word, basically meaning slow and thick, but respectably so, even somewhat comfortingly so.

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he had had a bad attack of the John F. Kennedys, as well as adopting *The Making of a President* as his literary, to some extent even tactical, model. Wilsonian pragmatism knew where to look for its sheep's clothing with which to cover its own sheep's body. For Wilson is more to be blamed for the neglect of power than for its use.

• *Direct theoretical point on Harold Wilson*: Bertrand Russell once distinguished two senses of "power"—power as "unchallengeability" was to be distinguished from power as "the ability to carry out a premeditated intention." I think this is crucial to an understanding of British politics today. Everyone has been going on for ten years about "the increasing power of the British Prime Minister." My friend and editorial colleague John Mackintosh wrote a standard and ultrarealistic text, *The British Cabinet*, which gravely weighed whether cabinet government was now giving way to presidential government; and he gravely concluded, as 10,000 grave student essays now do annually, "not quite, but nearly"—perhaps better say, "prime-ministerial government."

But in Russell's terms, Wilson's power has been of the "unchallengeable" kind—if I don't do it, no one else can: a monopoly of the instruments of decision-making. Yet it has rarely been able to carry out premeditated intentions. The record of effective use of power, in terms not even of socialist aspirations (I hardly pause to consider these) but simply in terms of managing the economy (where now a fifth of public expenditures are financed by borrowing), has been abysmal. To be fair, I must broaden the point: it is true of the whole postwar period. A monopoly of power has been mistaken for effective power. The mistake was plausible in wartime, indeed then was no mistake: when the whole nation was animated by a common sense of purpose etc., etc. But to be unfair and personal, Wilson's trouble is not merely that he made the old mistake of putting on the wolfskin of a wartime premier, as if it was effective for peacetime economic purposes—as did Attlee, Churchill himself in peacetime, Eden, Macmillan, and poor Sir Douglas Home—but about that he doesn't care. He appears still to be the last of a dying breed, those who enjoy power simply, obviously and deliciously for the sake of power. Like Baldwin or Coolidge he would sit there for ever if no one disturbed and the world stayed still. He shows no signs of wanting to do anything except keep the ship afloat.

He is the purest of pure politicians. I will have none of your retorts that that honor should have been given by the Rockefeller Foundation to Richard Nixon. Nixon defamed politics. He was in fact a crook even in damage to his otherwise strong political position. A little sniff of indulgence toward a little slipping of moral standards in Wilson's entourage; but if possessed of *une grande passion*, for man, woman, or money, he would cut off his right hand, or whatever, rather than not remain leader of the Labour party and even alternating Prime Minister of Great Britain.

In what might be politely termed a mellow after-dinner speech, full of boast, to the British Academy in June (the transcript of which is a collector's item in Fleet Street), he remarked:

> I have a portrait of Gladstone in my study at No. 10. I thought he should hang there, since he is the only other Prime Minister to form four administrations—though I have to concede that he was older when he formed his first than when I formed my fourth.

(So much for rumors that he may go soon and voluntarily—which his cronies occasionally spread to provoke little gasps of anguish from office-holders and to make his opponents feel that time, a good Wilsonian adage, will heal all.)

When nearly all expert and responsible opinion saw the need for devaluation in 1965, he put it off discourteously till 1969, then had the gall by 1971 to blame the Conservatives for the fruits of his own fixations, cowardice, and neglect. Similarly, this summer he took us to the brink of an absolute

Two Minds as One

BANGKOK, *Thailand, July 9*

(AP)—Mao Tse-tung still thinks well of former President Richard M. Nixon and says the Watergate scandal was the result of "too much freedom of political expression in the United States," Premier Kukrit Pramj reports.

Mr. Kukrit said that during his meeting with the Chinese leader Mao in Peking last week, the 81-year-old Mr. Mao told him: "What's wrong with taping a conversation when you happen to have a tape recorder with you. Most people in America love playing with tape recorders."

Mr Mao said he remembered Mr. Nixon's visit to China in 1973 and added: "Please tell him I still think of him."

—*New York Times*, July 10, 1975

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breakdown in international confidence in the British economy, before gingerly going back to the vastly complicated but utterly necessary task of creating an incomes policy.

SOCIALISM BEGAN with the belief that a free market could not achieve a just distribution of wages. It has been a temporary, lunatic nonsense, encouraged by Wilson, for the British left-wing of the Labour party to follow the self-interest of a few big craft unions and to declare that "socialism means free bargaining." Yes; in the capitalist economy.

But the point is that Britain is a mixed economy. Much of public investment already is made through the nationalized industries. No big industries are free of considerable controls, both direct and indirect, about levels of investment and about location of enterprise. As market restraints or union power have diminished, no other mechanisms have emerged to determine wage levels and differentials. No wonder with Sir Keith Joseph as Mrs. Thatcher's economic adviser, there has been a renewed outbreak of "free market economics" in the Tory party, which ordinarily, unlike the Republican party, is pretty bored with that kind of doctrinaire talk. Your true English Conservative doesn't give more than a very faint damn to the red iniquity of more national ownership or control, so long as they (maximum condition) are in government and control the vast patronage or so long as they (minimum condition) can ensure getting "balanced" representation on the boards, even when in Opposition—as they always can, so docile have British Labour governments been.

Wilson not merely tries to avoid making hard decisions, he has himself built up the myth that only by masterly inactivity (though like Alice, it requires a hell of a lot of running to stay still in the same place) can the Labour party be held together. The truth is that so great is party discipline and loyalty, that he could lead it where he wanted, if he wanted to lead anywhere, and if he troubled to prepare the ground.

To an extent astonishing to any American congressman, the two main parliamentary parties are dominated by the quest for office. After all, nearly 100 Ministerial positions, high and low, or posts as Whips, are in a government's hands, virtually the Prime Minister's. So between a third and a quarter of any majority party in the House of Commons have a job. An MP has to have friends of unearthly candor, as I heard Enoch Powell once say, if he does not believe that at the next Cabinet reshuffle a red telephone will wake his humble black one from its waiting hook.

So what do the backbenchers do—beside make gentle trouble and wait? Many things, of course, but the one thing that they are little used for is to mobilize opinion in the party outside Parliament. This leads a life of its own to an astonishing extent. And a life both declining and more intransigent. Membership of both the main parties has fallen rapidly. Mr. Dick Leonard, the deputy editor of the *Economist*, in a recent report for PEP (Political and Economic Planning) estimates that the Labour party's individual membership has probably fallen by two-thirds since its high point of just over 1 million in 1953, and the Conservatives have probably halved from just under 3 million in 1953. As numbers fall in the Labour party, the more doctrinally intense take over. No bad thing, in terms of socialist doctrine, but very damaging in the public eye (as the tragic-farce of Reg Prentice—a most popular Minister in the public eye—having his Constituency party determine to purge him as candidate next time round); and a sad admission of failure to bring more people, especially young people, into the party. The young tend not to join politically active groups, but "Good Causes" and one-shot pressure groups. However, instead of the party leadership using backbench MPs to try to reanimate the party, above all to convince the union shop floors that a national incomes policy is of the essence of socialism, the whole tendency is to let sleeping dogs lie—and then to practice unnecessary and unnatural exertions when the sleeping dogs get restless, whether out of boredom, pride, or conviction.

I remember hearing veteran Labour leader George Brown tell a very apathetic student audience back in 1965, before the days of student militancy, that "so warm am I with the idealism of youth flooding up to recharge my tired old batteries" (and they'd only given him sherry), that "I'm going to tell you tonight what the rest of the country won't know until they open their newspapers in the morning. That this lunchtime at Brighton the leaders of British industry and the leaders of the TUC signed in my presence a mutual declaration of intent to limit, by voluntary means, wages and prices". Either Royden Harrison (a left-wing and *Tribune* man) or I, we differ as to which of us it was, whispered in the other's ear, "He's got to sell it on the shop floor first." George Brown's hearing was the most unreported, phenomenal thing about him. He got into so many scrapes through hearing what

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he wasn't meant to when chieftains are in their cups. "Who's he that said that? 'Sell it on the shop floor first.' Your professor. Bloody sorry for you. Middle-aged cynic. Are you a trade unionist? Thought you weren't. I was, am a trade unionist. I know what the lads on the shop floor feel. I know if given a lead they'll follow."

True symbolic anecdote. The point is that if he'd spent twopence on capitalist market research, he'd have learned that the lads on the shop floor hadn't even *heard* of incomes policy. It was an affair of the liberal establishment. Perhaps if he had sat down and talked with (even incredibly just listened), not talked at, his own people, he'd have learned that acceptance would have needed a campaign as deliberate, long and grueling—but as possible—as, say, FDR's to get the Neutrality Acts repealed in 1940.

Leaders do need to be followed. Just because a man is elected does not mean that he has computerized, sensitized antennae to public opinion. Wilson turned the tables on his anti-Marketeers in the Referendum campaign and overwhelmingly won the 67 percent public majority for staying in Europe, and exposed how rhetorical rather than actual was the cry of his Far Left that "the people are against Europe." But he would never have lost control of opinion in the Parliamentary party if he hadn't made a complete U turn on Europe in 1970 in a purely tactical attempt to bring down Heath's government.

If he hadn't lost his nerve in 1969, he'd have got trade union reform with his second Labour government. Leaving the Conservatives to do the job, he pledged himself in order to gain union support simply to repeal, not to amend, all the Conservative legislation. Much of that legislation was, in fact, sensible: introducing injunctions and compulsory ballots of membership for the first time into British trade union law.

WILL the new initiatives work? Well, Wilson's friends say that only by taking the country in July to the very brink of economic disaster did he scare the TUC into making up their own incomes policy, which, more or less, the government has accepted. More likely, the TUC were just scared, indeed concerned and anxious, at the government's inactivity. So for the emergency, now admitted, the fear of run-away inflation, the TUC have said, for the moment, "To hell with differentials: no increases of more than a *flat-rate all round* of £6 per week."

Oddly, from out of all this, a kind of formal socialism may emerge. From what will virtually be a national minimum, there could also be a national maximum—not so much for social justice, however, as to sell the packet to the workers. The bluff could be called of all those arrogant ones who say that only limitless financial incentive gets good men at the helm of enterprises.

There could be much more equality at the cost of remarkably little less liberty—though some touchiness and tensions there: government dislike of the press, the BBC and the prosecution of the publishers of the Crossman Diaries. But would this semi-siege socialism engender more fraternity? Only the kind, I fear, of otherwise drowning men who succeed in bailing out the boat. But when they are on shore again, and the oil begins to flow?

And Ireland? And Scottish separatism? And talk of electoral reform because a government with 43 percent of the popular vote and a majority of one in the House of Commons presumes to speak for the people? Well, not too gloomy—nothing is about to break down, but everything is still working badly. □

Cunhal Visits His Mother (Heard in Lisbon)

Alvaro Cunhal, head of the Portuguese Communist party, visited his elderly mother whom he hadn't seen in many years. She questioned him:

"Alvaro, my son, do you still live in that broken-down old flat, with the unpainted furniture and the dirty rugs?"

"No, mother," he answered, "I have a fine suite now, with wall-to-wall carpeting, modern new furniture, and all the facilities."

"And do you still have the old car that could hardly get you around Lisbon?"

"No, I have a fine new Mercedes-Benz, with a chauffeur who takes me around."

"Are you still out of work, without a penny in your pocket?"

"No, mother, I'm a government Minister now, with a fine salary and all that I need."

"Isn't that too bad. You seem to be doing very well just when the country is about to go Communist!" □

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Stanley Plastrik

Portugal's Dangling Revolution

Lisbon, August 1

For a brief, involuntary moment, while traveling to Portugal's Estoril beach, we joined the revolution—or was it the "counterrevolution"? It wasn't easy to tell.

Rates on the suburban railroads had been raised by 30 percent to meet the railway workers' wage increase of over 20 percent, and the passengers—mostly suburban housewives, returning from a day's shopping in Lisbon, and commuting workers—were protesting. They neither held tickets nor were they prepared to pay. As the conductor approached us, the passengers began to shout at him; he smiled, shrugged his shoulders, and turned away. We enjoyed a round trip to Estoril without paying the fare. The Communist-dominated railway workers' union denounced the action as "counterrevolutionary"; who was right?

So goes Portugal's confused, dangling, often chaotic "revolution," and so goes Portugal's sinking economy as expenditures outstrip income. In the end, the fate of the revolution will be determined by the fate of the economy. Now, neither is thriving. Not one of the experienced political leaders or sophisticated intellectuals to whom we spoke dared venture a prediction.

The Portuguese revolution now is a mere 15 months old. Its course has been feverish, with the country approaching civil strife, military *coups d'état*, even civil war. So far, fortunately all forces have drawn back from the brink, still finding some basis for compromise. The revolution came after 48 years of harsh, clerico-corporative, semifascist dictatorship under Salazar and his pathetic successor Caetano. The population of about 9 million was largely poor, backward (semifeudal conditions prevailed in the countryside), with a 38 percent illiteracy rate. The per capita annual income was the lowest in Europe; $490 as compared with $830 for Spain. A major source of income has been tourism—always a sign of outrageous exploitation of a servant class. Western Europe's most underdeveloped nation, Portugal still is lagging far behind Spain.

Forty-eight years of clerico-fascism made for an absence of political initiative and democratic traditions. The "flower" revolution was welcomed by the people with great enthusiasm. Yet it had to be signaled by the army—and only then did the people come, dancing, into the streets. Henrique Galvao, hero of the dramatic seizure of the passenger liner Santa Maria, describes Salazar's Portugal:

> ... the people have been unable to speak freely since Salazar more than 30 years ago stopped listening to them; and, to show some signs of life, they have taken refuge in the cult of the "three F's": Fatima, Football, and Fado. Three decades of PIDE (secret police), concentration camps, hellish dungeons, censorship, violation of homes and of correspondence, tapping of telephone conversations, fiscal extortion, and political sham have reduced a simple, gentle, courageous people to the moral misery of the pariah peoples of the totalitarian countries.
>
> Fear is the general sickness of the population. It has been inculcated by every possible method. It was Salazar's strongest weapon. Fear was the foundation of his stability. ...

During the final months of the Caetano dic-

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Glossary of Portuguese Politics

MFA: *Movimento das Forcas Armadas* — Armed Forces Movement — organization of the military, divided into levels of political and governmental power, such as the Council of the Revolution (CR, *Conselho da Revolucao*), the supreme command of the MFA. The MFA is at the heart of the revolution.

COPCON: The MFA's internal security force, under the command of General Otelo de Carvalho, commander of the Lisbon military garrison. A Lisbon witticism and play on letters has COPCON meaning "how to organize the PIDE (Salazar-Caetano secret police) under another name."

PCP: *Partido Communista Portugues* — Portuguese Communist party — headed by the notorious Stalinist Alvaro Cunhal.

MDP/CDE: *Movimento Democratico Portugues* — Portuguese Democratic Movement — front for the Communist party.

PSP: *Partido Socialista Portugues* — Portuguese Socialist party, organized abroad in 1973 — led by Mario Soares.

MES: Movement of the Socialist Left.

MRPP: Movement to Reorganize the Proletarian party — both these are Maoist sects, usually described in the press as "leftists."

PPD: *Partido Portugues Democratica* — Portuguese Democratic party — an ally of the Socialist party with whom it shares control over the Constituent Assembly — publishes *Espresso*, probably the best weekly in Portugal.

AN: National Assembly of the armed forces — 240 members representing the three branches of the armed forces, plus regional commands in the country.

AC: The 247-member, elected Constituent Assembly whose purpose is to draft a constitution — the Socialists and their allies (PPD) hold 195 seats in this body; the Communists have 30.

INTER-SYNDICAL: Trade union federation, dominated by the Communist party.

CDS: *Center Democratic Socialist Party* — the most conservative party to participate in the April 1975 elections — without serious influence. □

tatorship a folksong, "Grandola," haunting yet militant, had become the people's song, expressing the hope for personal and political freedom. This song, played on the Portuguese radio the night of April 24, 1974, had been the armed forces' signal for launching the uprising. The attitude of the people has now undergone a fundamental change; this alone justifies the revolution. From the cowed, gray, melancholy people who walked with cast-down eyes— so I remember them from a visit five years ago—they have changed into a lively, alert, and vivacious people who love to talk and argue in the Rossio square of Lisbon.

True, the Portuguese have little experience with the instruments of democracy. They have lived for a bit more than a year in freedom. They have held one authentic, successful election, and have set free the last of the colonial empires. Are these not real accomplishments? During the two weeks of our visit we observed freedom of movement, of speech, including sharp criticism of the government, and—except for the seizure of the pro-Socialist newspaper *Republica*—freedom of the press. The weekly *Espresso*, popular among the educated middle class and the best paper produced in the country, features a running critique of the MFA (Military Armed Forces) and the government. While the euphoria of the early weeks of the revolution has worn off, the momentum of the rediscovery of political freedom is still present. Given half a chance to assert themselves, the Portuguese will not return to any form of totalitarianism, Left or Right.

"It's as if Kornilov has shouted, 'All Power to the Soviets!'" — *A Lisbon historian*

The MFA (Military Armed Forces) is the unique feature of the Portuguese revolution. Comparisons with the military clique of Peru or with the Boumedienne-led military regime of Algeria may help us understand the Portuguese MFA, but only in part. Whoever heard of a group of young officers who hold classes and discussions among themselves relating to theory and ideology (Marxism, dialectics,

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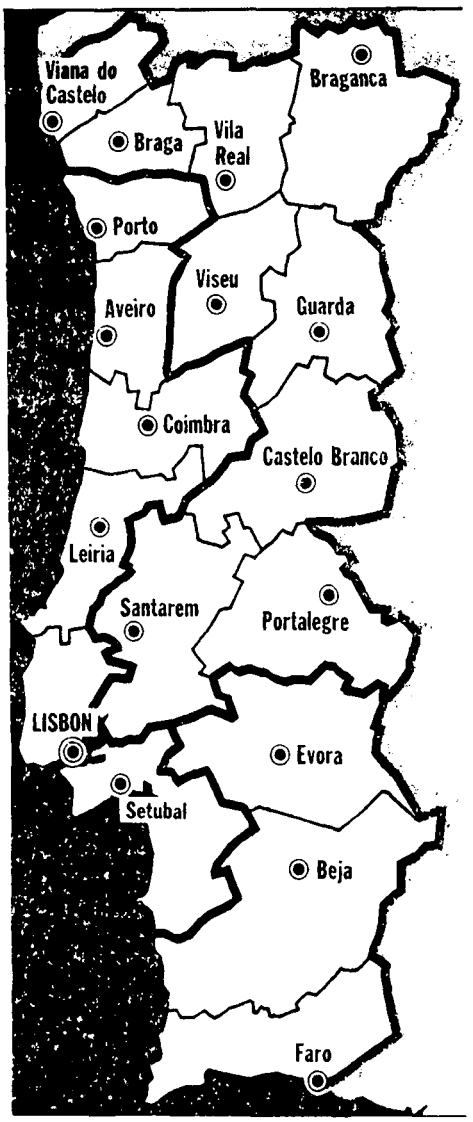
etc.)? We also must understand that, as was explained to us by Minister of Social Communication Jesuino, *comandante* of the MFA, that the MFA has undergone its own internal evolution since the days of April 25—that, for example, the conservative Spinolista influence has been cast off, and each officer has gone through his own individual experience.

Kenneth Maxwell gives the best account of the formation of the MFA (*New York Review of Books*, April 17, 1975). Maxwell explains the social background of the hundreds of young majors and captains who were radicalized during the colonialist wars in Africa and describes both their program for Portugal and their hostility to the business and industrial communities. The MFA's original coordinating committee (set up to organize the overthrow of Caetano) then gave way to the considerably larger body, the Assembly of the Armed Forces Movement. This Assembly, representing the grass-roots opinions of officers and men, has been more moderate than the "leftist" Supreme Revolutionary Council, at one time the MFA's top policy unit but now reduced to the status of an advisory body.

Fifteen months ago the MFA, through its component bodies, could legitimately claim political and organizational leadership in the revolution. These were the euphoric days of "MFA-Povo"—the MFA and the people. A government, including Socialists, Communists, and other parties, was formed with the blessing of the MFA. There were promises of a free election within a year, though it was unclear whether power would be turned over to a constitutional civilian government. From the beginning, the Communists made it clear that this was not their perspective. They called for a "deepening" of the relationship between "the people" and MFA, through nonparliamentary, nondemocratic means. And so, very early, an ideological tussle developed between the democratically oriented civilian population and the military (which was ardently supported by the Communists), over the nature of political power in Portugal. To this day this issue has not been resolved, although numerous ef-



This map shows Portugal's 18 electoral districts and the country's three geographic regions. The wealthy coastal industrial belt runs from Porto in the north to Sebutal, south of Lisbon, and includes Portugal's largest cities. In this region, the Socialist party did best in the recent election, especially in the towns and cities. The northern region is characterized by small, rural farms and homesteads, high population density, and high rates of illiteracy. This is the country's most conservative area, and here the CDS and PPD gained a majority. The south is the region of the Algarve tourist area, and the Alentejo with its huge estates where absentee landownership and large numbers of landless laborers encouraged the predominance of the Communist party in the villages.

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forts have been made to do so; the latest and most dubious is the creation of the generals' triumvirate whose legitimacy at this writing (who chose them?) is so shaky as to cast doubt on its survival.

The MFA stood for three things: nationalism; a new socialist society that will end the rule of the 200 families who have controlled 75 percent of the nation's wealth, a society that will improve conditions for the working and poor peasant classes; and political pluralism. Pluralism is obviously the key.

When we arrived in Portugal, the MFA, after passing through weeks of crisis that had ruined the summer tourist trade, had managed to lessen the tension by issuing a lengthy statement known as the "Political Action Resolution." This document, annulled in effect by the new government crisis, was a compromise among warring ideological groups within the MFA, with each tendency corresponding more or less to one of the civilian groups or parties. In this pastiche everyone could find consoling words. The Socialists, for example, were encouraged by the promise to build a "pluralist society." But one man's "pluralism" is another man's "authoritarianism." A few weeks earlier, on a visit to New York, while addressing an audience of professors and intellectuals, Minister of Communications Jesuino had defined "pluralism" as one's right to hold one's opinion . . . so long as one obeyed the military!

We only know vaguely, from endless gossip, about the true relationship of power and opinion within the MFA and its subordinate bodies. Its many meetings are held in secret; its minutes are unpublished; only its operational resolutions are available to the public. "MFA-Povo" has become "MFA versus Povo." MFA's body of a few hundred men—in command of some tens of thousands of armed forces, subject to no higher surveillance and a power unto itself—seems to have lost its moral authority in the country. As this moral authority has dissolved, MFA's dependence on the Communist party has increased, with the Communists in turn concentrating their major efforts on the MFA. This is the present dynamic of the Portuguese revolution. But the MFA is highly vulnerable—it needs the support of the democratic civilian parties (PSP and PPD), which in turn enjoy the support of the middle-class functionaries and professionals, the senior public functionaries, and the industrial managers and technocrats.

Consider the problems: a 30-percent rate of inflation, a foreign currency reserve that is about to vanish (a standing joke is that the Portuguese owe a debt of gratitude to Salazar for having built up a substantial gold reserve), 300,000 unemployed (close to 10 percent of the working population), and the prospect of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Angola, etc., who must be absorbed.

Kenneth Maxwell has observed that the colonial war in Mozambique was a major factor in the political education of yesterday's middle-ranking captains and majors in Portugal—who now are the generals of the MFA. Let us carry this point one step further and examine the Frelimo movement (the Mozambique Liberation Front) as it now exercises power in its own country. Samora Machel, the 41-year-old president of Mozambique, has proclaimed his determination to create the first "authentic Communist state" in Africa. Machel is essentially a Maoist ideologue and insists upon keeping the country in a state of political and psychological turmoil to avoid "backsliding." With a large body of politically trained cadres, "Bourgeois Individualism" will be eliminated and the party line fixed in the consciousness of the people. This indoctrination process has priority over the usual economic program of nationalization, control over small trade, and the beginnings of collectivist agriculture. Frelimo's strategy includes the elimination of all other bases of political power in Mozambique, and in this at least it has been successful. A major instrument has been the formation of so-called dynamic groups, or party bodies, in every Mozambique institution: in the factories, shops, slums, schools, and rural areas. A party

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plenary meeting in February 1975 issued a series of resolutions that stated:

> It is necessary to pursue a purge campaign within the ranks of the dynamic groups to detect, denounce, and expel infiltrated elements. ... Those in dynamic groups must know profoundly the party line; they must constantly use the formula of criticism and self-criticism. ...

Now Mozambique is not Portugal and Portugal not Mozambique. Portugal remains fundamentally a West European nation. But a powerful minority within the ranks of the MFA is stimulated by its experience with Frelimo in Mozambique, and with the strategy of successful guerrilla movements. The "dynamization groups" sent into the Portuguese countryside by the MFA have not had much success (for one thing, the young soldiers and officers rarely speak the regional Portuguese dialect of the peasants whom they call together). Portuguese peasants are not tribal members of an African society (in many parts of the country, long since emancipated from semifeudal bondage, they have a strong sense of landownership, and associate "Communism" with confiscation). Nevertheless, Portugal's MFA cadres are inspired by this approach, openly admiring the "Marxism-Leninism" of the Frelimo movement, its discipline, its dedication, its hierarchical centralization of power and authority.

C. L. Sulzberger suggests in the *New York Times* that the MFA wishes to constitute itself as "a new class." Wearing the stars of admirals and generals, living in the villas of Portugal's former rulers, and driving around in Mercedes-Benzes are only the superficial trappings of a ruling class. The MFA must first assure its power, then construct a state in its own image and find an economic base. Even with the aid of the Communists, this is not easy.

How do they envisage it? The activities of Brigadier General Otelo de Carvalho, head of the MFA's 4,500-men Praetorian guard (COPCON), directly threaten democrats and democratic institutions. COPCON squads raid homes, offices, hotels; they hold prisoners in COPCON's name in the notorious Caxias jail outside Lisbon; they conduct illegal hunts of "counterrevolutionaries" and "economic saboteurs." Such activities hinder the construction of any kind of stable regime.

The MFA's theoretical guidelines, to be sure, point in another direction—that of "popular power," a long-term alliance between the army and the people, under the army's guidance. In a number of documents, the latest dated early July and precipitating the immediate crisis between MFA and the Socialist party, the military theoreticians have attempted to spell out their vision of the future Portugal. It is a new version of a left-authoritarian regime, borrowing from Frelimo's Mozambique, the Peruvian military, the Algerian experience, and from Eastern Europe's "people's democracies." Like so much else in the Portuguese revolution, this is a pastiche.

How to resolve the antagonism between military and civilian power? This has been the MFA's major problem. The MFA's growing hostility toward the Socialist party follows from the Socialists' stress on rule by the citizenry—free and untrammeled. The MFA's July document, presented to the public as a "guide"—a guide the moderates in the MFA claim is not intended to go into effect for another 10 or 20 years—has been rejected out of hand by the Socialists and their supporters in the PPD. The Communists, on the other hand—mobilizing their forces under such slogans as "Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly; Workers' and Peoples' Power"—endorsed this latest expression of MFA pseudo-Marxism and military Maoism.

The document was elaborated by a working group representing the three branches of the armed forces, plus COPCON. It approves the creation of a Popular National Assembly, product of the alliance "MFA-People." Apart from proposals that nationalization be extended to all areas of the economy, and a proposal for further extension of the agrarian reform program, the novelty of the document lies in its proposals for organization of power: district

(*continued on page 338*)

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On Revolutionary Freedom

The case of *Republica* [the Portuguese socialist paper taken over by the Communists and MFA] is not simply a revelation of the internal conflicts affecting the destiny of the Portuguese revolution. It is also a revelation of our own capacity to analyze and pinpoint, politically and sociologically, the problem of freedom of the press. . . .

The problem of freedom of the press presents us with a paradox. Many of those for whom freedom of the press is both an absolute good and a progressive demand, if it concerns a fascist or reactionary regime, consider this same freedom a subordinate good and a reactionary danger when it concerns a revolutionary process.

This paradox can easily be "resolved" through a way of thinking whose logic goes as follows:

1. Freedom of the press is a "formal freedom" and, during the development of the revolution, it becomes a superficial luxury for bourgeois intellectuals. It is subordinate to the winning of real freedoms for the toiling masses.
2. In the unfolding of the revolutionary process freedom of the press becomes a danger, since large numbers of people are still subject to the old, dominant ideology. Freedom of the press is both a screen and an arm of the counterrevolution.
3. If a conflict develops between freedom of the press and the development of the revolution, the latter can progress only at the expense of the former, which increasingly becomes the bearer of reaction.

From this point on, any protest against an attack upon freedom of the press is necessarily seen as expressing an attitude of moderation, of slowing down the revolution—even a counterrevolutionary attitude. A cleavage "revolution/reaction" is automatically set up over this question, and those who defend a piece of paper rather than thinking about how to feed a famished people and how to teach the alphabet to an illiterate population are cast upon the garbage heap of history.

We are the more receptive to this model of thought since it harmonizes with the notion, carved on our school benches, that the French Revolution of 1789, when in danger, saved itself by the Reign of Terror. But the Terror of 1793 had value and meaning only in a situation of extreme emergency and peril for a revolution the first of whose three precepts was "Liberty." Hence the first problem that must be posed is that of the development of the Portuguese revolution itself.

Whither Portugal? What is its model? At the moment we know there are hesitations and uncertainties. But we also know that nowhere in the world is there a model for democratic socialism. There do exist different variants of bureaucratic socialism whose common trait is the hegemony of a single apparatus that tends to concentrate all power in its hands, beginning with power over information. These variants have their origin in the social organization forged in the U.S.S.R. between the years 1917 and 1937 when the concentration of all power in the hands of the Party apparatus was brought to perfection.

In addition,

— given the absence of any model of democratic socialism;

— given the organizational virulence of the apparatus model;

— given, finally, that the stifling of dissonant voices and of multiple sources of information ineluctably leads to the establishment of a monopoly of information, that is, an official truth always defined by those in power, two questions are raised:

- Does not invoking a revolutionary emergency in order to sacrifice freedom of the press cover up, in fact, the setting up of a permanent structure?
- Does not the idea of self-defense of the revolutionary process from reactionary intoxication conceal, actually, the propagation of a new intoxication, using the word "revolution" as a cover?

If the revolution moves ahead at the price of smothering the press, it turns its back upon the hope of an original, Portuguese form of socialism and, with less and less originality, steers toward a monotonous model of bureaucratic socialism.

We must also inquire into the relations between the structure of information and the structure of society under a bureaucratic regime. We tend to believe too often that information originates in "superstructures" and in "formal freedoms" that are secondary in relation to real freedoms. A very serious gap in sociological theories, bourgeois or Marxist, prevents us from grasping the profound relationship between the organization of information and the organization of society. To understand this relationship we must link what the term "information" signifies in the language of the press with what it signifies in the sciences of organization that have issued from cybernetics. In a machine, information is the "program" that commands the flow of energy. In an organism, the "genetic code" commands both development and survival. In human societies, information thus understood covers the rules, the norms, the things forbidden, the know-how, the knowledge, including information of the press—that is, everything touching upon control and command.

In this sense, to control information is to control that which controls, to command that which commands, to formulate that which gives form. Appropriation of control by a

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ruling elite reduces the majority of citizens to carrying out purely routine tasks. The commanding relationship of information over energy in the domain of physics is reproduced in the sociological relationship of exploiter to exploited.

Thus, monopolization of information by a minority corresponds not only to a monopolization of power but to generalized enslavement. The monopolist capitalization of information by a single apparatus is, in fact, the peak of monopolistic capitalism.

All particularist domination masks itself behind a universal principle. Divine Right monarchy caused God to speak through its mouth; the bourgeoisie caused man to speak. It is clear that, in the first instance, this implied the silence of God and, in the second, the silence of man. The apparatus of sham Marxism causes the people to speak through its mouth, but it is clear to carry through this ventriloquist operation it must silence the people.

The control over information that is invoked to construct a true socialism is precisely that which permits the construction of a pseudosocialism and, at the same time, to conceal the reality. If in the U.S.S.R. class domination and an exploitation of man by man has been reinstituted, this power is based upon an elitist and hierarchical appropriation of the means of information by the Party. This same appropriation makes it possible to offer the appearance of an emancipated people rather than the reality of a people deprived of all means of competitive elections in the factory, in the municipality, in the electoral district, in the nation. It is a so-called progressive society without the right to strike, with internal passports, swollen police controls, "Gulag Archipelago." From which follows a radical, implacable, distressing yet reassuring conclusion:

If there is a loss of freedoms that must be considered formal, there is no progress in freedoms that can be considered real. All repression of information becomes an oppression of society.

This was the great discovery of the Polish and Hungarian intellectuals in 1956–57, of the Czechoslovakian intellectuals in 1968, when they realized that the freedom of expression to which they aspired corresponded to the needs of the workers and peasants. Freedom prevents not the proletarian from eating, but the tyrant from sleeping. The notion that we must pay for the acquisition of a bit of equality by the loss of freedom must be denounced as a reactionary myth.

Hence, the problem of freedom of information becomes central. Freedom of expression that is uncontrolled by the powers that be does more than satisfy the decadent whims of the bourgeois *intelligentsia*. It is not just the intellectual's fetish, or a luxury of a revived liberal. It is a problem for the organization of society.

We know now that science can only exist because it establishes a milieu of researchers in which confrontation of antagonistic theories and exercise of freedom are possible; this prevents the natural tendency toward dogmatism from transforming science into its opposite. Similarly, society can find its truth only through confrontations. If the objective of a socialist society is to constitute a society without classes, thus liquidating class antagonisms, it can be animated only by the play of oppositions, of contradictions, of antagonisms at the level of ideas and information. One of the first conditions for such a society is plurality of the sources of information. If freedom of the press is limited or falsified in bourgeois societies, the problem in a socialist society is not to annul but to enlarge it.

Thus, the democratic and libertarian organization of information is a key problem for a socialist society. Without that, socialism turns into its opposite, becomes the socialism of "His Master's Voice." Will we be capable of a policy and practice of revolutionary freedom?

Otherwise, not only are we not prepared to emerge from one of the greatest tragedies of history, but we are ready to begin it all over again.

EDGAR MORIN □

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councils, workers' committees, village councils, councils of cooperatives, associations of small and medium agriculturalists. An officer or a soldier representing the MFA will sit on each body. A pyramidal structure will lead upward to the Popular National Assembly, and all voting will take place openly, by raised hand! Whether or not the MFA conceives this prefabricated structure as a Portuguese version of "soviet power" is hard to say; the resemblance to the famous soviets of the Russian Revolution—before they were transformed into mere decorative bodies—is of course nil.*

Profoundly antidemocratic in implication (political parties would have no place in this structure except, of course, for the Communists who would easily infiltrate), this MFA model of society is rejected out of hand by the Socialists as a form of left-authoritarianism violating the spirit of the Portuguese revolution.

No aspiring group in Portugal can fail to have an economic program of some sort. Although economics is scarcely its strong point, the MFA, again with strong Communist backing, has carried out what passes for economic policies. It has increased the minimal wage to 4,000 *escudos* per month—a substantial raise—and granted 20 and 30 percent hikes to industrial workers and white-collar employees. Reminding one of Allende's policies in Chile, the consequence has been a savage inflation estimated at 8.7 percent per month (*Figaro*, July 14, 1975). While the stores in Lisbon are still filled with (high-priced) goods, and the food shops abound with fairly cheap summer fruits and vegetables, plus a healthy supply of fish, the approaching winter months will tell a different story; the country is experiencing a temporary euphoria, much like Chile under the Allende regime in its first year and a half.

For 15 months Portugal has lived off reserves accumulated by previous regimes—foreign paper and a large gold reserve. Now the first is exhausted and the second is being discretely negotiated in the world gold market. The nationalized banks, run by a Communist-dominated bank employees' union and Communist-inspired officials, operate with exhausted treasuries and day-to-day improvisation. There is the familiar cry of "labor discipline" and the "battle of production," but spontaneous strikes (opposed by the MFA-Communist bloc in the unions) and workers' seizures of plants have an equally familiar, paralyzing effect on productivity. In the south, the *latifundia* are in the hands of agricultural laborers awaiting the details of agrarian reform programs. In the north, the peasant landowners fiercely guard their small holdings, ready to battle unto death.

The MFA has always charged that the political parties, with the exception of the Communist party, act within a "reformist perspective." By contrast, it says, rank-and-file committees of workers, peasants, soldiers, etc.—some in existence since the revolution began, and others to be formed over the years—have a "revolutionary perspective." The Popular National Assembly is to redivide the country into seven regions or, in the pretentious language of the military, seven "poles of socioeconomic and cultural development."

The economic base upon which this political-administrative superstructure would rest would consist of nationalized property in industry, finance and banking, and agriculture. A beginning has been made in erecting this system of bureaucratic state capitalism or "socialism." After Spinola's thwarted right-wing coup of March 11, 1975, the left wing of the MFA (COPCON and the officers of certain elite regiments), plus those officers active in the "cultural dynamization" movement, obtained the immediate nationalization of private Portuguese banking and insurance companies. This was the MFA's first open attack on the power of the seven major financial

*"The St. Petersburg workers'council and the provincial soviets were the first freely elected proletarian mass organizations. No matter how informally elections were carried out—through open voting by show of hands at general meetings—and no matter how fortuitous the outcome might have seemed at times, the councils' power and authority rested primarily on the free election of deputies." Oskar Anweiler, *The Soviets: The Russian Workers, Peasants, and Soldiers Councils, 1905–1921*, p. 52.

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groups that dominate the banking system of the country (86 percent of total deposits, 83 percent of the portfolios of commercial enterprises). In April of this year, the state took control of 14 industrial enterprises: steel, petrochemicals (Petrosul, Sonape, Sacor, Cidla, and 75 percent of the Portuguese capital invested in Soconap, transporter of crude oil), as well as of four transport enterprises, including the National Navigation Company (merchant marine), TAP (Portuguese national airways); this was followed in May by measures that will lead to the nationalization of the drug and pharmaceutical business.

Who holds power? Or, if power is floating in space, so to say, in which direction is it floating? In Portugal, the simple answer is to point to the MFA—*there* is the power. The Communists' total attachment to the MFA seems to give strength to this view. At all crucial points in the past 15 months, the MFA-CP alliance has emerged at the center of decision-making.

Yet things are not that simple. For one thing, the MFA's hold on power still seems tenuous, and all sides acknowledge that the Communist party has been in decline (both in membership and influence) since the April elections for the Constituent Assembly. In Portugal today, it seems, there exist elements of dual power—but in a sense that reverses the usual historic experience of the old regime finding itself confronted by a parallel, revolutionary body that challenges its authority. In Portugal, by contrast, a regime that claims to be "revolutionary" (the MFA-CP alliance) has been challenged, tentatively and hesitatingly, by what may be called dual power in civilian form. This challenge has been expressed in the elections of April 25, 1975, the formation and semifunctioning of the Constituent Assembly, the struggle to achieve a free press and free sources of information (radio, television, etc.), and in the demand for free elections in the unions, municipal bodies, etc. *Parallel to the military regime, there is a democratic, reforming civilian regime trying to be born.* This is the heart of the struggle.

Perhaps suspecting that the civilian population would reject its advice to boycott the elections and thus show its scorn for the warring political parties, the MFA virtually imposed a prefabricated Constitution upon the country weeks before the elections, with all essential power reserved for the High Council of the Revolution, a military body consisting of 28 officers.

A 14-page document outlining the new Constitution that the Constituent Assembly was to adopt was accepted—enthusiastically by the Communists, with reservations by the other major parties. Not to have spoken out more forcefully at that moment may have been a serious tactical error on the part of the Socialists, since this enabled the military to describe the elections as a "pedagogic exercise" and, after the elections, to downgrade and even bypass the Constituent Assembly. The document of this proposed Constitution guaranteed the military's right to run Portugal for a period of three to five years, putting the country "irreversibly on the road that will lead it to Portuguese socialism." While the Stalinist leadership of the CP again showed its concern for the young officers of the MFA whom it hopes both to serve and to use, the other parties yielded, in effect, to intimidation and blackmail.

The High Council of the Military—formed after the Spinolista uprising of March 11, 1975, and the army purge that followed—was at that moment the most radical wing of the MFA, but certainly not its majority. In any case, the draft Constitution gave the armed forces veto power over the civilian government it projected. For example, the president would be elected by a Legislative Assembly of about 250 members as proposed in the Constitution, plus the Assembly of the Armed Forces of 240 officers and enlisted men, the two together forming an electoral college. The president would head the High Council of the Revolution as well as the armed forces. Since the council is a military body, the president would be a military man.

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The Socialists and their allies hoped that a large vote in the April elections and a correspondingly large number of seats in the Constituent Assembly would enable them to stand up to military pressure, perhaps even annul the draft document for the proposed Constitution that they had signed. But, despite their decisive victory in the elections, their hopes were quickly shattered. Premier Gonçalves, who represents the Communist view in the government, announced that the Constitution would have to be ratified by the High Council of the revolution, thus assuring its conformity to MFA wishes. The MFA also told the Constituent Assembly it would have to provide for the Constitution's guarantee that the military set the country's basic policy over the next four years in order "to start the economic and social transformation of the country into a socialist state." As to the military's abandoning power after a term of four or five years—who can take that seriously?

The Constituent Assembly has been meeting fitfully for some weeks now. Though morally and politically the most authentic expression of the will of the people, it may sink into oblivion even before its work is completed. The general populace ignores the work of the Constituent Assembly, largely out of a growing indifference; the Communist party denounces it on every occasion, calling for its dissolution; the ultra-leftist sects search for a Lenin to send the Assembly packing; the MFA ignores it. The initial proposal of the Socialists that the Constituent Assembly, in addition to working on a draft Constitution, should spend part of its time discussing current affairs, the economic situation, etc.—in other words, begin to act like a parliamentary body—was rejected by MFA and Communists alike. The rise or fall of this Assembly is as good a sign of Portugal's political development as any. And at the moment, it is at a low point.

Two episodes involving Radio Renascenca, the Lisbon radio station belonging to the Catholic Church, and the Socialist-oriented newspaper *Republica* indicate the growing authoritarian drift. The Catholic radio station had been seized by a group of its ultra-leftist employees known as the Popular Democratic Union. The Communists piously denied any involvement. But the government could not get COPCON security forces to clear the station of those who had seized it. The artillery regiment called upon refused to take action against workers with whom it sympathized. When Premier Gonçalves reluctantly decided that the station must be returned to the Church, he was overruled by the Supreme Revolutionary Council of the MFA, which proceeded to "nationalize" all privately owned stations, including Radio Renascenca.

As for *Republica*, brutally stolen from its Socialist-oriented editors, it now is edited by an officer of the Portuguese army and controlled by a coordinating committee of printers. The struggle over *Republica* turned out to be a major defeat for freedom of the press. Again the Communists disclaimed responsibility, pointing out that a majority of the workers involved were "leftists" who do not belong to the Communist party. And again the Communists supported the military. The role of the MFA in this affair, before turning over the newspaper to those who had seized it, consisted of hypocritical nonintervention, symbolic gestures and phrase-mongering, without any serious guarantee of freedom of the press; all this under the pretext of "the will of the workers."

It is a shameful story and led the Socialists to quit the government. In the words of Socialist leader Mario Soares, his party is "... extremely preoccupied by the fact that the newspapers, radio and television engage in brainwashing and completely deform news and information." Citing the fact that many Portuguese are now listening to foreign radio stations, "as in fascist times," in order to learn what is happening in their country, Soares accused the CP of exercising a monopoly of control over the news media.

We observed that the majority of daily papers (morning and evening) support the government and the Communists (although such critical papers as the weekly *Espresso* have the freedom to publish whatever they wish), and that the radio and television pro-

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grams are Communist-slanted. (*E.g.*, during the peak of the repression in India, Television Portugal showed a lengthy program praising the "human side" of Mrs. Gandhi, no doubt made available by the Indian Embassy in Lisbon.) The radio and television people we met were obviously Communists or sympathizers, and their domination of the media was privately acknowledged to us by informed persons.

Whatever may have been the relation between the military and the Socialists, the divorce is now consummated. A point of no return has been reached. The Socialists accuse the MFA of seeking to "militarize political life" and of desiring to erect "a typical police state," while they in turn are charged with being a disruptive political party that "ought to show evidence of more patriotism."

In a statement made at the Lisbon airport on May 10, Socialist leader Mario Soares said to a representative of *Le Monde*:

> My party is democratic. It is the largest party in Portugal. I do not deny that I had a plan for parliamentary and reformist democracy that would have made it possible to avoid major shocks in rallying Portugal to the Europe of the Common Market. With such a project I respected the heterogeneity of an antifascist, anti-Communist electorate, eager for reforms, and a working class that, in its majority, seemed to reject any kind of authoritarianism or attack upon our freedoms. It was the sole formula adopted for the winning over of an electorate fearful of totalitarian Communism and which is afraid of the unknown and of adventurism.

This statement came after Soares's removal from his post as Foreign Minister and his temporary acceptance of the post of Minister without Portfolio; in other words, symbolic representation. But Soares now is a powerful spokesman for the growing opposition to MFA-Communist rule.

The Socialist party of Mario Soares is the main obstacle to the growing militarization of Portugal. Founded in exile several years ago, the party has mushroomed rapidly in membership, attracting to its ranks youth, intellectuals, workers, some peasants, and educated middle-class people. It is a mass party but, except for Porto and the surrounding area, it is not yet deeply rooted in the countryside—although it won considerable support among peasant landowners in the elections. Its ability to mobilize large numbers of followers in Lisbon has been proved over and over again, but it has not had time to develop corresponding strength in the rural areas.

Let me stress that this is not a conventional social democratic party. It is more aggressive and militant, with an effective leadership that is slowly developing its own program. The Socialist party is now on the point of issuing a detailed economic recovery program for the country; it has understood the need for austerity, for ending indiscriminate and hasty nationalizations, and for discipline and productivity in the country's economic life. It is especially aware of the need not to antagonize the experts and specialists, and the small businessmen. The Portuguese Socialists have not hesitated to meet challenges head-on when necessary, as the *Republica* struggle has shown, and their leaders now show that they are prepared to pursue their fight clandestinely, if the present phase of active resistance should fail. In Mario Soares they have a leader of experience, popularity and integrity. The cry of the Socialists is "Socialism, yes! Dictatorship, no!"

In striking contrast is the rigid disciplined cadre party of the Communists, numbering between 75,000 and perhaps 100,000, but reported to be losing membership. If Soares is a popular and personable figure, Cunhal is a charismatic, intimidating, and cynical one. Partly a throwback to the fanatical Stalinists of the 1930s, Cunhal can more fittingly be described as a Communist geared to the tactical needs of the 70s. A vivid sense of his deeply totalitarian outlook, his utter contempt for freedom, and his disdain even for those European Communists, like the Italians and Spaniards, who propose a Popular Front course, can be had from his now famous interview with the Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci (part of which appeared in the *New York Times*, July 13,

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1975). The Portuguese CP issued a statement denying that Cunhal had said what Fallaci quotes. But Fallaci, in turn, has sent a letter to *l'Unità*, organ of the Italian CP, claiming to have a tape of the interview she is prepared to submit as evidence—a challenge Cunhal has not accepted.

Whether or not Fallaci quotes Cunhal accurately, there is no doubt that what she has him saying is what he really believes. Under his leadership, it has been the CP's strategy to make itself indispensable as an ideological ally of the MFA; to infiltrate other organizations, gain control and, ultimately, to rule. At least in Portugal, the "Leninist road to power" now leads not through the proletariat but through generals and colonels. To the section of the military that admires Cunhal, he seems a model of boldness, discipline, and ideological firmness, and insofar as their aim is to modernize the country through draconian measures, these military men find themselves instinctively close to a Stalinist type like Cunhal.

Whatever Cunhal said in his interview with Fallaci—he has made other statements also. At some point he has said that if the Socialists proved to be intractable, a purely military government would be acceptable to him. And in an interview published in *l'Humanité* (July 17, 1975), shortly after the Fallaci interview, Cunhal preferred to stress his party's moderation. "When we say that there will be no bourgeois democracy, Western style, in our country, we don't mean that there will be no freedoms." In fact, he added, "We are struggling in Portugal for a regime with two fundamental characteristics: the widest freedoms, among them fredom of expression and the right of political parties to be formed and to be active; in addition, basic economic and social transformations that will lead us to socialism."

Can these seemingly contradictory statements be explained? Everyone in Portugal acknowledges that an old Stalinist like Cunhal has no interest in or feeling for political freedom. But his varying poses, from blunt intimidation to silky reassurance, are to be seen less as reflections of political opinion than as complex elements in the overall strategy of the CP—namely, toward a drive for power, shared at first with the military and then, if circumstances allow, closer and closer to the East European model of party hegemony.

The size and resources of the Portuguese Communist apparatus are wonders to behold. The party can plaster Lisbon overnight with any number of excellently produced posters and leaflets. The party headquarters, which we visited, is a model of efficiency—receptionist, referral to an organized committee or the proper functionary, an elevator that works, bookstores and propaganda pamphlets, the inevitable visit of the Soviet Union's lady astronaut and the Bolshoi Ballet, etc. The number of CP functionaries in Portugal runs into thousands; rumor has it that the Russians provide millions each month to produce this effect of a smoothly operating machine with an aura of inevitability about it. By contrast, the Socialist apparatus appears technically ineffectual. The elevator at headquarters is broken; one's papers and introductions wind up in wrong and unexpected places; there is much confusion and helter-skelter turmoil. But there is also an exhilaration and devotion founded upon conviction rather than fanaticism.

The cadre-party of the Communists is incompatible with the voluntary party of the Socialists. It is the difference between authoritarianism and democracy.

With the rising level of violence, with clashes between Communists and peasants in the countryside and between rival party demonstrators in the cities, it has become clear that only if power is turned over to a civilian government—headed by the Socialists but including all political parties and military representation—can the situation be saved from further deterioration and the danger of civil war. The Socialists remain the key to the political impasse, the only hope of continuing the revolution along peaceful lines and for significant changes that would benefit workers, peasants, and the middle class.

As the first European nation to establish overseas colonies and the last to give them up, what are the country's relations likely to be with its ex-African empire (Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique) and with Africa and the Third World in general? What will be Portugal's role in Western Europe, and what its relations to the European Common Market?

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While these issues cannot be decided until the political complexion of the country becomes clear, most of them are strongly affected by the present internal struggle.

In the past, Africans faced with job competition from poor whites coming from Portugal in search of economic opportunity were forced to leave the shantytowns outside Luanda and Lorenzo Marques and to emigrate. They moved on to the former Belgian Congo, Rhodesia, and South Africa, and there they came in contact with nationalist movements and new ideas. *Indigenas* (natives), *mestizos* (mixed), and *assimilados* (assimilated) alike joined together to form liberation fronts. In 1961, the year of the great divide for these movements, the Portuguese regime in Africa was challenged by armed insurrection and given notice to quit the continent. Angola was the center, and there alone 50,000 Portuguese troops fought the revolutionaries. Some 150,000 Portuguese were drafted or recruited to go overseas to save the Empire for Salazar and Caetano—all in vain. The colonial wars continued up to the April 1974 revolution. Forty-four percent of the annual budget was poured down this drain, and the average length of overseas service was four years. To stop this war, the regime at home had to be overthrown. The war in Africa led directly to the revolution in Portugal. The first paragraph of the MFA's program condemns the old regime precisely on this point.

This is clear enough, but the future of Portugal's relations with the excolonies is not. Soares, while Minister of Foreign Affairs, had successfully arranged the liberation terms with Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, etc. Yet Angola, potentially the richest of the former colonies, now is torn apart by the power and tribal struggle among three rival groups. Whatever the dreams of the MFA may have been in terms of their relations with the former African colonies, it seems that at most, vague cultural and modest trade relations can be expected. Meanwhile, thousands of returning Portuguese are now living in camps around Lisbon.

Portugal's relations with the more advanced West European countries have long been unsatisfactory and degrading. As Kenneth Maxwell remarks,

> ... for most of its history it was itself little more than a dependency of others. ... .Portugal's very poverty was implicityly a weapon and a threat to the Europe it had first led into imperial adventures; for if Portugal was a part of Europe geographically it was separated from it politically and by a deep failure to create modern social and economic institutions.

The Socialist party urges a strengthening of Portugal's European ties through the European Economic Community, from which urgent economic help was sought this past summer. With an average monthly loss in foreign reserves of over $100 million, with the political impasse preventing any drastic measures to reduce imports, the economic situation demands integration with Western Europe. Neither the Arab nor the Soviet bloc have offered to help, and a meeting of the ministerial council of the Common Market, strongly influenced by the Social Democratic representatives present, turned down Portugal's request for aid on the ground that the *Republica* and Radio-Renescenca incidents showed failure to pursue the promised goal of a pluralist democracy. In the words of England's foreign secretary, "Why should we aid another dictatorship?"

President Ford recently expressed his regret that the investigations of CIA activities have made it impossible for that organization to pursue an active role in Portugal! Apparently, his notion of supporting the cause of democracy in Portugal is limited to what the CIA can, or cannot, do. Most Portuguese would agree that the United States has conducted a cautious, hands-off policy in Portugal, largely confined to watching the Russian intervention that, in turn, is felt to be strictly limited by the strategy of détente.

In any case, Cunhal's CP is not a mere puppet of the Soviets; it has a life of its own—even a small group of young oppositionists who are opposed to Cunhal 's "tough" policy and closer to the moderation of the Spanish and Italian Communists.

The European democratic socialist and intel-

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lectual Left is watching events in Portugal with nervous intensity. The Social Democratic parties of Western Europe have given material help and moral support to the cause of their embattled comrades in Portugal. It is a significant reawakening of international solidarity on the part of a movement that appeared to have long since forgotten such concepts. In part it is based on self-interest; in part upon genuine feelings of solidarity. Perhaps more important is the debate in European intellectual circles over the meaning of such basic notions as freedom of the press, the relationship between liberty and material progress, etc. (cf. Edgar Morin in this *Dissent*). The issue of democratic rights has suddenly become vital to the European Left.

When Mario Soares took his fellow Socialists out of the Lisbon government, precipitating the drawn-out crisis of July and August, his European comrades without exception gave him their support. This support was endorsed by the Communists of Italy and Spain, but not by the French CP, which has sharpened its confrontation with the Socialists, reflecting the intensity of the debate over press and other freedoms in French Left circles, a debate that is closely tied to the events in Portugal.

Portugal is not on the eve of an open Communist seizure of power, with a pro-Soviet, Cunhal regime. The Communists have neither the strength and support nor the means for direct rule.

Postscript

September 1

THE WAVE of intensive anti-Communist sentiment that has been expressed in numerous actions bordering on and sometimes spilling over into violence, which developed during the summer in northern Portugal, has placed the CP on the defensive. Seeking to maintain its power, which rests mainly on top-level deals with portions of the military, the CP has begun casting about for new allies. It keeps pointing to the possibility of a right-wing uprising, first as a way of muting its democratic opponents and second in the hope, perhaps, that a threat from the Right might reunify the "revolutionary elements." But contrary to Cunhal's claim that "fascist reaction" is responsible for the anti-Communist agitation, it must be emphasized that the actions of peasants and townsmen, especially in the north, are mainly a spontaneous revulsion against the threat of a "People's Democracy," East European style. Involved in these actions have been scores of thousands of small, property-owning peasants who fear—and why should they not?—that a CP-dominated government would endanger their small land-holdings. One of the crucial tasks of the Portuguese Socialists is to persuade such peasants that democratic socialism (as distinct from authoritarian Communism) poses no threat to them whatever.

No doubt, reactionary elements are fishing in these troubled waters. No doubt, they would like to take advantage of the turmoil in the country. The one way to prevent that, in the opinion of our Portuguese friends, is to establish a stable, democratic regime that will represent the majority of the people.

Putting a decisive end to Communist efforts to inch toward a monopoly of power is a necessary condition for progress in Portugal—but not a sufficient condition. What is needed is a stable government, basically civilian in character, with the Socialists and Popular Democrats playing a major role, and with the overly politicized military (each general at the head of a faction, backed by his own battalions) returned to a subordinate role. A program of economic reform and austerity, together with major help from the Western powers, would then have to be instituted—a program that would gradually build up a modern society, enable the workers to gain material benefits and develop free institutions, and reassure the small peasants they will not be regimented. Portugal's dangling revolution might then achieve the stability of democratic progress. □

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Peter Jenkins

Dilemmas of Social Democracy

What used to be sorrowfully regarded as the "English disease" can now be diagnosed more precisely as the ailing of social democracy. Some of the symptoms may appear peculiarly British but what I will call "the Social Democratic Dilemma," and will later define, is of relevance to all advanced industrial and democratic societies.

Since the war, no matter who has been in office in Britain, social democracy has been in power. That is to say, the essential terms of the postwar settlement (the settlement of the class war, it seemed at the time, itself an extension and consolidation of the "fairer deal" that was necessary to unite the nation in war) have been upheld until recently by all governments. The ideological rhetoric of the parties at election times belied the fact that in office neither sought to vary significantly the bargain that had been struck between the managed post-Keynesian welfare state and the sectional interest groups that had it in their power to make the state unmanageable. Since 1967 both Labour and Conservative governments have attempted variously to apply statutory controls to wages and prices and/or to regulate by law the activities of trade unions. These endeavors were perceived by the unions as misguided and hostile acts and were vigorously opposed. The surprise defeat of the Wilson government in 1970 and the sudden dramatic fall of the Heath government in February 1974 were chiefly the consequence of their failure to take the measure of the "union problem." Today, twice shy of interfering with trade-union bargaining rights, we have a Labour government effectively abandoning, by the pursuit of monetarist policies, the postwar full-employment goal that was the founding rock of the social democratic era.

The purpose of the departures in the mid-'60s, certainly in the case of the Labour government, was not to strike a death blow at social democracy but rather to preserve it by resolving "the Social Democratic Dilemma." This, stated simply, is how to reconcile the maintenance of the full-employment welfare state (the political objective of the trade unions in Britain) with the maximization of money wages through unfettered collective bargaining (the industrial objective of the trade unions). In its economic form this dilemma is manifest in all mixed economies with free representative institutions and, as I put it here, it is no more than a sociopolitical description of inflation. However, there is more to it than this for Britain—and more to it than this for socialists—because it challenges at the heart what I called elsewhere "the Social Democratic Assumption" (in *The Battle of Downing Street,* London, 1970). That is, again simply, that the instrumental and idealistic goals of organized labor are compatible one with the other and consistent with progress toward social justice in an expanding society.

The dilemma takes a peculiarly acute form

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in Britain because of the unusual strength of the trade union movement and because of its institutional interlock with the political party of its own creation. Trade union organization in Britain is far more extensive than in the United States while at the same time less centralized and less susceptible to discipline at the plant level. British trade union organization still reflects many of the occupational divisions and craft jealousies of the Industrial Revolution. It is notorious, for example, that Ford in Britain negotiates with 12 manual workers' unions and others for its white-collar employees.

The structure of British trade unions would be favorable to sheer syndicalism were it not for the historical fact that it was the unions who at the turn of the century created the Labour party, which rapidly replaced the Liberal party in a two-party system of government. What is referred to as the "labor movement" consists of the trade union movement (the "industrial wing"), the Labour party (the "political wing") and the now relatively unimportant cooperative movement. The unions wield block votes at the policy-making Labour party conference, are the chief paymasters of the Labour party, and sponsor their own members of Parliament. The two largest trade unions command nearly a quarter of the votes at the Labour party conference. However, for our purpose the importance of these institutional links is that they embody the notion that the interests of the trade unions and the Labour party are not only compatible but complementary. That is the crux of "the Social Democratic Assumption."

In so defining my terms I go some way toward defining what I mean by social democracy. It is an elusive concept that has been used confusingly to embrace very different ideological positions at various moments of history. In Britain it is customary to use the expressions "democratic socialism" and "social democracy" interchangeably and the word "socialist" as shorthand for both. The Labour party has generally preferred to talk about itself as a party of democratic socialism, especially since the German Social Democrats (SPD) officially abandoned socialism at their Bad Godesberg conference in 1959. In English the expression "democratic socialist" implies a stress on the word "socialist" while "social democrat" implies emphasis on the word "democrat"—and the difference is not without ideological innuendo. Recently there has been a tendency among partisans and commentators alike to use the terms more pejoratively; according to this the "social democrats" are the "moderates" who see positive virtue, not least some guarantee of liberty, in a mixed economy while the "socialists" do not and therefore, in extreme cases, are suspect as "democrats" or of only being so in the participatory rather than parliamentary sense.

Now it is of no practical importance and of small ideological significance whether the British Labour party chooses to call itself "socialist," "democratic socialist," or "social democratic." But for our purpose here we must be clear as to what we mean. The word "socialism" originally had a quite precise meaning and the late George Lichtheim's uncompromising formulation is historically the correct one. He wrote: "Anything that falls short of abolishing the wage relation has no claim to being described as socialism, although it may be a station on the way thereto." By this definition anything that calls itself democratic socialism has to be at least a station on the way to socialism. This has been generally the implication of the expression, whether the emphasis was on the democratic means to the socialist end, on the democratic nature of the socialist end, or on both equally.

Social democracy originally was to have exactly the same meaning. The German Social Democrats after 1864 were Marxists and, although parliamentarians, saw themselves nonetheless as revolutionary socialists. Marx himself in his later days was really a social democrat. But if we employ today the same terms to describe a very different reality, at least in Britain, we are bound to give them a strikingly different meaning. Hence I propose a negative definition: that by "social democracy," in

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contradistinction to "democratic socialism," we mean a form of politics or economic organization that does *not* envisage, or indeed intend, the achievement of socialism in a future however distant. Whether or not ideologically congenial, it is surely an accurate enough description of the reality in Britain where, its occasional ritualistic pretensions notwithstanding, the Labour party cannot be said seriously to be an instrument for socialism.

Only by giving the word a new and quite unhistorical meaning could this be said to be the case. To take one often quoted example, the late Hugh Gaitskell's dictum (borrowed from an earlier writer, Arthur Lewis) that "socialism is about equality" would have made no sense to a 19th-century socialist unless Gaitskell had meant (which he did not) that equality was "about" the common or social ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. What he was getting at was exactly the opposite: in his view the ownership of the means of production no longer determined the nature of society, and capitalism, as modified, no longer stood in the way of the goal of equality. In other words, socialism was not "about" equality; rather equality was no longer "about" socialism.

By stressing equality as one of the values associated with socialism and recommending its emphasis as a goal of the Labour party, Gaitskell was edging toward a definition of social democracy as a nonsocialist creed. One of the difficulties with social democracy is that since Marx it has not acquired an ideology worth the name but has picked and chosen eclectically from the socialist and the liberal-democratic traditions.

The English economist John Vaizey suggests that "in a post-Keynesian economy, a social democratic party has no ideological basis" while Michael Harrington drains the concept ideologically dry, for most Europeans, when he writes with the AFL–CIO in mind that "there is a mass social democratic movement in America today in a procapitalist, anti-socialist disguise."

Running through the revisionist thinking of the '50s, which influenced powerfully the approach of the British Labour party in the '60s, is the theme that social democracy (even if still dubbed "socialism" by some of the revisionists) is concerned primarily with societal (and also personal) values and claims no special competence in economic management. Put another way, the social democrats are concerned primarily with the redistribution of resources and only secondarily with their creation. Their position on this is not essentially affected, whether they take the problem of production to be essentially solved, as they were inclined to do in the late '50s, or stress the importance of economic growth, as they have had to do since the early '60s.

My point here is that there is nothing in the social democratic ideology—nor for that matter in its lack of ideology (i.e., mere populist pragmatism)—that helps it toward a solution of "the Social Democratic Dilemma."

Indeed, the lacuna of the revisionist position, insofar as it purported to provide a theory and practice of social democracy, was its complacency on the trade union question. Anthony Crosland, in the seminal work of the period (*The Future of Socialism,* London, 1956), emphasized the major distribution of national income in favor of the working class, which had already taken place, and also what he described as a "decisive movement of power within industry itself from management to labor." These were important aspects of the transformation of capitalism that was the starting point of the revisionist case. Crosland also perceived and complained about the overnarrow approach by the unions to collective bargaining and their excessive preoccupation with money wages. Nor did he ignore the problem of inflation, although he concluded that it was not in those days serious enough to warrant any intervention in collective bargaining. However, none of the revisionists saw any basic contradiction between the aims and methods of the trade unions and their own preoccupation with the creation of a more just and equal society in the conditions of reformed capitalism. Crosland's final words on the subject were: "I judge that a government bent

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equally on avoiding inflation, and creating an egalitarian social climate, could rely quite well on the sense and moderation of the unions to maintain a reasonable degree of internal stability."

Now, nearly 20 years later, a similar complacency is the philosophical foundation of the English "Social Contract," according to which the unions are obliged to do no more than maintain their living standard in the face of inflation in return for the government restoring to them full legal freedom while pursuing a range of redistributive economic and social policies. The notion of a "Social Contract" made a virtue of necessity in that the attempts by the 1964–70 Labour government, first, to apply statutory restraints to wage bargaining and, second, to regulate strikes and other trade union activities (somewhat on Taft–Hartley lines), had brought the labor movement near to splitting. The political support of the trade union movement in the 1974 elections was contingent on the Labour party undertaking to liberate collective bargaining from similar restraints imposed by the 1970–74 Conservative government. The "Social Contract," as was to be expected, has succeeded in its purpose of papering together the labor movement but so far has failed signally to prevent escalating wage settlements from accelerating the pace of inflation. A year after the inauguration of the "Social Contract," pay increases were running at an annual rate of increase of around 30 percent, price increases at above 25 percent. The economy appeared to be heading for hyperinflation in spite of sharply increasing unemployment.

For the Labour party, as the exponent of social democracy, this situation of crisis raises fundamental issues. Without some means of engaging the effective cooperation of the trade unions in the reasonably stable management of a mixed economy, social democracy is left without ideological foundation. It becomes a politics of ends without means, devoid of all answers to creating the resources it seeks to reallocate. The resources for investment, whether social or productive, become residuals after private consumption over which government has no control.

By this process, full employment and the welfare state, progressively starved of resources, cease to be available as trade-offs for socially responsible and change-accepting trade unionism. Alternatively, or as now concurrently, inflation gains pace and makes nonsense of an ideology of social justice. Even with a satisfactory rate of growth with moderately stable prices, the social democratic objectives of social justice (which are costly in taxpayers' money) come into conflict with the endeavors of trade unionists to recoup at the bargaining tables what a redistributive government removes from their pay packets. At an unsatisfactorily slow rate of growth this tension becomes acute, as it did under the last Labour government in Britain; with nil or negative growth the practice of social democracy becomes virutally impossible, as now appears to be the case.

In this predicament—I repeat, made especially acute in Britain by the fact that the conflict between the instrumental behavior of the trade unions and the reforming programs of the Labour party takes place within common institutions—there are broadly three choices.

One is to jettison the social democratic commitments to full employment and welfare and attempt to bring inflation under control by the imposition of monetary discipline. Apart from the risks in this to democracy itself, no such policy could be contained within even the loose and broad tradition of social democracy.

Then, second, there is "socialism," by which in Britain generally is meant remixing the economy to the point at which the public sector becomes dominant and state control the order of the day. But an expansion of the role of the state cannot of itself result in a more rational, or productive, or more socially acceptable use of resources. This is not because the state need be unbenevolent or is lacking in skills, nor because the market is an inherently superior allocator (although it may be a necessary guarantor of political liberty); but it is so

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because the state, for as long as it is a democratic state, is the servant and hence the victim of popular democracy and possesses as yet no means for resolving within its institutions the competing claims of groups upon resources.

Whatever the mix of the mixed economy, the wage problem will remain for so long as political democracy survives.

The third course, and the best hope, is to persist in the endeavor to make social democracy work—and this means focusing once again on the very crux of "the Social Democratic Dilemma." This is to say, social democracy has to discover some way of promoting the equitable, fair, and acceptable distribution of income through the regulation of wage-fixing by means other than free collective bargaining.

In the 1950s, when the idea of equality was brought to the center of social democratic thinking, less importance was attached to inequalities of income or reward than to inequalities of opportunity, status, and esteem. Since then a number of things have happened. Policies to produce greater equalities of opportunity have failed to produce the hoped-for equalities of result. Inequalities of income have become the object of much more profound dissatisfaction, and differences in pay (what in labor-relations jargon are called "differentials") have become more contentious than differences in the distribution of wealth. If social democracy is to be in any meaningful or acceptable sense "about equality," it has to be about the distribution of rewards and, perhaps, about actual equality of reward. This can be argued quite independently and separate from the economic case for regulating wages for the purpose of curbing inflation, allocating resources, and promoting economic growth. But, for the purpose of constructing a more coherent social democratic ideology, it has the merit of linking the problem of equality with the problems of increasing production or restraining consumption, toward which social democracy—as I have argued—has lacked any distinctive approach.

Not only have the vagaries of collective bargaining—a system of reward allocation that perpetuates the arbitrariness of an imperfect market economy—made more contentious the inequalities of income, but so too has technological change. Innovation is an even more unfair allocator than the market and probably causes more resentment. For, as Rousseau observed, "The nature of things does not madden us, only ill will does." Technology confers power that can be translated into unfair gain. The man in charge of a switch at a power station or at the wheel of a truck delivering oxygen to industry possesses the sanction for fixing his own reward; his power is not market power but the power of ransom over a technologically interdependent society. More and more groups are discovering the power of their own indispensability—surgeons and nurses among them—and adding to the resentment of those upon whom technology has not conferred such power. Market economics no longer provides a rationale for this jungle, no more than it does for the interplay of corporate power.

Trade unions are so rooted in their opposition to obsolete market economics—an opposition that takes the form of playing the old game without noticing that the rules have long since changed—that they have become the chief agent for ensuring that the working class achieves nothing more than the money illusion. Shortly after the war Harold Laski—if anyone the apostle of a then dawning, or so it seemed, era of social democracy—could write that "the British trade unions are moving to the capture of State Power in Great Britain, with a view to the transformation of a capitalist into a socialist community. . . ." and that "the TUC of Great Britain, in a word, is feeling its way to the fulfillment of a socialist philosophy of which the Labour Party is the proposed instrument. . . ." Nothing so clearly marks the now-ending of that era than the distance between those statements (in *The American Democracy* [New York, 1948], in which Laski perceived similar tendencies in the American labor movement) and the present reality.

For the reality is that the modern state, with its vast responsibilities as employer and per-

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sonnel manager, is held responsible for the maldistribution of incomes whether it acts in the matter or not. The very phrase "distribution of income," as Irving Kristol has pointed out, suggests the existence of some authority dealing the cards. Thus the state, far from becoming the captive of the trade unions, as Laski predicted, becomes the inevitable victim of their displeasure and the ultimate repository of aggregate *ressentiment*. The social democratic state, because of its greater pretension to the power of justice, becomes the greater victim.

So above all else social democracy must face the problem of reward allocation. Without some planning of incomes, no other forms of economic or social planning are feasible in conditions of political freedom. If the freedom of collective bargaining as we know it today is asserted as an inalienable freedom, the result may be the extinction of all democratic freedoms—freedom of combination, of course, among them. The historic partnership between the British Labour party and the British trade union movement was once the envy of social democrats the world over. Today it is a roadblock to social democracy. The fault lies neither with the aspirations of working people for improved living standards nor with the failure of politicians to pursue what are called, always vaguely, "genuine socialist policies"; the fault is to be found in the contradiction between what one commentator has called "instrumental collectivism" and social democracy's commitment toward growth and social justice. Some, on the Right and the Left, express glee at the bankruptcy of social democracy; but others among us, who still insist on the compatibility of socialist values with political liberties, are obliged to find a way out of the Social Democratic Dilemma by moving toward the regulation of reward within a framework of representative government by consent. □

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Democracy and American Power

With the end of the Vietnam War, and the recent events in Portugal, it is only natural that many people should be discussing the prospects for democracy. We, too, are deeply involved in this discussion. To set it going in our pages, three Dissent *editors, each of whom has sharply defined and distinct opinions, write briefly on such matters as these: Does the survival of democracy in Europe and elsewhere depend on the continued exertion of American power? Is American power a barrier to the growth and extension of democracy? How do internal political developments in Europe, such as the electoral blocs in Italy and France between Communist and Socialist parties, affect the prospects for democracy? etc. etc. These articles were written before August 15.* – EDS.

1. Bogdan Denitch

Americans share a degree of ethnocentrism scarcely matched anywhere else. The defeats in Southeast Asia, the growing challenge to the worldwide Pax Americana, the increasingly limp performance of the American economy, all add up to—in the eyes of most Americans—a crisis of the world order.

The panic is perhaps exaggerated, or at least as exaggerated as the previous view, informed by liberal optimism, that America could redo the world in its image. But while both beliefs are unreal, they are also reflections of a more modest reality, i.e., the fact that in the period after World War II the United States was easily the preeminent world power and that now this dominance has been seriously shaken.

After World War II America was viewed, quite naively perhaps, as a liberal world power interested in protecting pluralistic political democracy and gradual economic reform and in preventing the spread of the totalitarian Soviet system. But in fact, since World War II, it has been a *sine qua non* of any politics of radical reform in Western Europe and the Third World that a major obstacle would be a direct intervention by the United States, supported by its indirect dominance of the world market and the sources of economic and financial aid.

Thus a limit on the changes that could be made by the socialist parties of Western Europe, as well as by reformist regimes in the Third World, was seen as an external one. This limit was at least as much a problem as the conquest of sufficiently broad internal majorities. By the same token, any strategy of alliances between socialists and the Communist parties in Western Europe had to deal not only with the problem of the relationship of the latter parties to the Soviet Union and their willingness to abide by democratic rules but also with the limits of tolerance that the U.S., directly or through NATO and the World Bank, would show toward such experiments.

These external restraints no longer operate or at the very least are no longer as effective as in the recent past. Therefore the prospects for radical ruptures with the existing order of things are now much better and will depend primarily on the domestic politics of a given country and only secondarily on the reaction of the two superpowers.

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• *What are the likely consequences?* I will concentrate on Western Europe, where a series of factors make the prospects of Left coalition governments in the southern-tier countries—Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Greece—promising. And this development may, in turn, tilt the whole of European politics to the Left. There is, for one, no longer much of a realistic fear of direct American intervention. Second, Russia is now perceived not as a power necessarily interested in direct expansion of its sphere of dominance but as a fundamentally conservative power desiring to maintain a world *status quo* through détente with the United States.

The optimism that pervaded the European social and economic scene for the last few decades has pretty much come to an end. This optimism was based on the real and substantial increases in living standards and in the modernization of the West European economies, which relegated the question of economic redistribution to the background since most social classes were benefiting from increases in their living standards. There was the perspective of a continually expanding economic pie. But now in an economic situation fraught with uncertainties, scarcity of raw materials, and instability of the international monetary market, the traditional class issues of economic redistribution again come to the forefront. Or, to put it differently, the end of the economic miracle turns Europe back to the unsolved class conflicts, which in turn means that the parties of the Left can no longer afford to limit themselves to the gradual reforms characteristic of the postwar decades.

Finally, the Communist parties of Italy, France, and Spain are no longer perceived as, and I believe no longer are, primarily allies of the Soviet Union but are parties primarily concerned with coming to power and carrying out their programs within their own countries.

• *What does all this amount to?* I am postulating a sharp shift to the Left in European politics within the next decade, with Left coalition governments including the Communists in the Mediterranean countries, and with social democratic majorities in most of the rest of Europe. I am therefore arguing for the prospect of a socialist-dominated Europe, where the Common Market becomes an organism not for mere stability but a loose framework for coordinating the economies and social policies of European states moving toward socialism.

Such a development would have a number of side consequences. It would accelerate the tendencies in Eastern Europe toward increased independence within the limits of the Warsaw Pact and of increased assertiveness by the East European working classes. It would further isolate the United States as a world power and force it to take into account not merely its favorite sparring partner, the Soviet Union, but a Europe whose economic interests would often set it at odds with the United States. Western Europe is, after all, a more natural trading partner for the Soviet Union than the U.S. in a number of important respects: it too is capable of producing the high technologies the Soviets want to import, and it needs access to the raw materials and energy resources the U.S.S.R. can provide. The West Europeans are not likely to be willing to see access to the energy resources of the Middle East dependent on the vagaries of U.S. foreign policy. And any socialist strategy in Western Europe would require a systematic attempt to deal with the multinationals, and specifically those dominated by American capital.

Therefore, in addition to the economic competition that such a Europe would pose, it is likely to establish restrictions and control over American capital, including perhaps the nationalization of portions of certain multinational corporations. This would exacerbate relations with the U.S.

W*hat does all of this have to do with the prospects of democracy*? To begin with, democracy as used by most American journalists and political scientists—and unfortunately by many on the Left—has had a peculiar working definition, particularly since World War II. We have in effect used primarily the Anglo-Saxon liberal model, which emphasized procedures making any but the most gradual

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social change difficult, if not impossible. We have seldom used the classic model of democracy—the rule of the *demos*. Italy has been seen as a "democracy" because of its party pluralism, despite the fact that any reforms of the antiquated civil service bureaucracy, which really rules Italy, and any reforms of the rapacious Italian economy have been blocked for decades.

In fact both Italy and France were seen as democracies when their working system *explicitly* excluded from participation the quarter, and sometimes third, of the electorate that voted Communist. Throughout the '50s the rule of the parliamentary game was that Communist votes in Parliament not be counted in votes of confidence. This was accepted by liberal democrats because the Communist parties at that point were defined as parties unwilling to play by the rules of the democratic process.

The political democracy that characterized Western Europe in the past three decades—the civil dialogue of pluralist liberal parliamentary regimes—worked, as Seymour Martin Lipset has put it, because the temperature of political discourse was kept low and most participants agreed on a set of limits upon what could be done in politics, economy, and society. This is acceptable provided one does not believe that there is a need for fundamental social change, which by definition is outside the rules. To put it more crudely, democracy worked the way it did in Western Europe because the political system had been "Americanized" to such an extent that the range of political realistic alternatives was limited and the societies consequently were depoliticized. This is, in short, a democracy of the welfare state bureaucrats. It is also a democracy that could only exist given a continued domestication of the working class and its unions.

Western democratic politics in the past three decades has become increasingly a matter of technocratic management and less a matter of genuine participation by the masses in decision-making. The acceptance of the liberal paradigm involves in part a pessimistic view toward the very *possibility* of such participation in a modern industrial society. Thus, as the governments of Western Europe and the United States widen their jurisdiction and an increasing number of issues in the economic and social spheres are defined as technical, theorists of political democracy legitimate the process by redefining democracy as an idealized, abstract version of British parliamentarianism, with its courtesy, clubbiness, and decency, all of which are admirable qualities but have little to do with the political power of the working class or the masses of the populace.

Recent empirical studies of European administrative elites by John Armstrong and of the French higher civil servants by Ezra Suleiman underline my point: parliamentarianism has increasingly turned into a facade where little of importance is decided, while the basic decisions are managed by professional civil servants. Suleiman adds that in France precisely the higher civil servants are *political*, consciously and systematically developing into France's ruling political party, and are increasingly recruited in ways that exclude the parties of the Left from access to decision-making.

This is an updated version of Marx's classic point that the working class cannot simply take over the administrative structure of the bourgeois state for its own purposes. But in the modern managed welfare economies, the bureaucracy comes to be less the servant and more the coordinator of the dominant class interests. It thus can turn against sections of the bourgeoisie in order to preserve the social order itself.

All of this may be very efficient, but it has little to do with any substance of democratic politics. In that sense, there is a truth—a partial truth—in the theory of the "convergence" of advanced industrial societies, and it may well be that the pluralist political democracy as we have known it is simply a more civilized and humane way of social decision-making without permitting any effective challenges to the economic and social system. After all, Communist bureaucrats in Eastern Europe do not use repression by choice; they prefer to

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manage through political socialization, indirect pressures, and cooptation.

When we talk of the crisis of democracy in an era of declining U.S. power, therefore, we talk about this limited, bureaucratized, manipulated democracy. It is a democracy that has been permissive toward its intellectuals and has been able to extend the boundaries of a consumer society to strata that have never before participated in it. For radical intellectuals it is obviously a more tolerable social order to live in than any of the existing alternatives, but it is not a democracy in any of the classic meanings of the word. One of the problems of democratic socialists is that in response to the various quasi-participatory and plebiscitory regimes that have dispensed even with the sham of liberal democracy, we have often defensively clung to the flawed existing model and refused to speculate or take chances on the possibility of advancing the boundaries of democratic participation.

We have permitted ourselves this mental flabbiness because radicals of my generation have developed politically through polemics with defenders of Stalinism and other totalitarian systems. In that framework, Western bourgeois democracy was much the lesser evil. The price was that attempts at radical reconstruction of the social order in the West were postponed indefinitely, and erstwhile radical critics became moderate social democratic reformers.

Now, however, we no longer have a monolithic Communist bloc counterposed to basically decent and stable welfare states in the West, with expanding economies and underpinned by American power. In order to preserve democratic values, socialists will have to start taking chances and actively attempt to transform the existing societies, not just incrementally but basically. If the problems of advanced industrial societies no longer can be managed through Keynesian welfare measures, the alternative will require the kind of radical rupture that involves risk-taking—and *it is a risk* to attempt to create in Europe Left majority coalitions that include socialists and Communists. It is an unavoidable risk if the whole political terrain of the Left is not to be abandoned, and it is a risk our socialist cothinkers in France, Spain, and Italy are well aware of even as they propose to take it.

A critical factor in discussing the prospects for democracy lies in our evaluation of the character of the Communist parties of Western Europe. The traditional view of democratic socialists, since the '30s, has been that the Communist parties are not merely parties of the Left with a wrong program. Rather, we have felt that what was unique about the Communist parties was that, though their base was the working class, they subordinated the struggles of that class, both to the interests of the Soviet Union and to the rule of a Communist bureaucracy that itself would evolve into a new exploitative class.

Thus the CPs were seen as parties operating within the working class with programs that would signify the exclusion of the working class from economic and political power. This view was reaffirmed and more fully developed with the growth of the bureaucratic collectivist state socialisms of Eastern Europe. In Eastern Europe, however, this process was facilitated by two factors: the presence of Russian and Warsaw Pact forces, and the absence of major working classes with independent institutions.

Since the middle '50s this situation has changed. The evolution of polycentrism has increasingly led to a differentiation among the Communist parties themselves and to alternate foci of power within the Communist world. The very fact that China and Yugoslavia challenged the Soviet Union's claims to hegemony facilitated the breaking loose of the Western Communist parties from Soviet tutelage. The stability of the postwar settlement made unlikely any direct expansion of Soviet military and political power, and the CPs of Western Europe were consequently faced with the need to work out the problem of the road to power in a situation where Soviet aid was unlikely.

Further, a growing awareness of the realities of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union made it necessary for the West European Communist

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parties to differentiate more and more the socialism they sought from the Soviet and East European models. The majority of the members of the West European CPs were socialized politically after the process of polycentrism began; in their experience the CPs have been primarily parties of the working class, with independent political programs. No matter what one thinks about the sincerity of the CP leaderships, the Communist parties of Western Europe have operated as Left social democratic parties, more hostile to the U.S. and friendlier to the U.S.S.R. than others, but certainly independent and quite often at odds with the Russian party over program and policy.

This trend is most evident in the Italian, Spanish, and Swedish parties. For the past decade the Swedish party has supported, albeit critically, Olaf Palme's social democratic government, and it has been sharp in its criticisms of Soviet and East European practices. The Italian party, for all practical purposes, has become the focus of a loose coalition of West European CPs and is explicitly committed to the maintenance of democratic norms and a parliamentary system in case it comes to power. The Spanish CP has excluded the pro-Russian wing from its leadership and is in a coalition with socialists, Left demo-Christians, and the younger military. In these cases, I would argue that being determines essence, and that whatever are the traditional attitudes in the minds of the older and dwindling portion of the membership that is still sentimentally attached to the Soviet Union, the practices of the parties are those of democratic workers' parties. The Italian CP now proposes a coalition that goes beyond the traditional one with the socialists and attempts to create a bloc that would include the Left Christian Democrats. The Italian CP would not be content with a 51 percent majority, which it rightly regards as inadequate for major social transformation.

The problem is really a different one: it is not whether the CPs of Western Europe *prefer* democracy but whether democratic norms and values are held by them with sufficient firmness, so that they would resist temptations to "go for broke" in a stress-filled period of transformation. That is, should the opportunity offer itself, would they try for a complete takeover? There quite simply is no ready answer.

I would add that under conditions of stress there are precious few political movements and parties in which one can have total confidence. The "democratic" regime of India has been all too ready to use martial law and other legislation to crack down on what it perceived as threats; the judicial practices of Italy and West Germany with prolonged detention would shock the ACLU. The question rather is, are regimes of the Left, including the Communists, likely to keep broad enough majorities, once they are in power, so as to provide enough stability for maintaining democratic institutions? Part of the answer lies in the response of Europe's conservative forces, and the degree to which they are willing to abide by democratic norms in a period of social transformation.

Rosa Luxemburg first outlined the second answer in her essay on the Bolshevik Revolution. Today that answer applies to both the Communists and the socialists. In criticizing what she called the parliamentary cretinism of the German Social Democrats, she contrasted their—in her view hopeless—policy of seeking a majority *for* a revolutionary program rather than seeking to win majorities *through* a revolutionary program. If Left coalition governments move energetically to deal with the backlog of social and economic issues in their societies, they are likely to win increasing support, and increasingly firm support, of the broader strata that program would benefit. The most dangerous thing the parties of the Left could do would be to administer limping welfare states, thus losing their basis of support while antagonizing and frightening the middle class. This is the lesson I read in the catastrophe of Chile.

I am optimistic about the prospects of Left governments in the Mediterranean countries because of the experience, capabilities, and seriousness of the Communist parties involved. They are unlikely to enter into ruling

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coalitions unless they have a prospect of carrying out substantial parts of their programs, and if they do carry out their programs, they will permanently tilt the political and social scene to the Left, so that the new consensuses and debates will occur on a different political terrain. A crude analogy of what I am talking about can be seen in Sweden, where the social norms established by the Swedish Social Democratic party are no longer challenged even by the conservative opposition, which is reduced merely to claiming that it can administer the welfare state more efficiently.

Another reason for my belief that Left coalition governments can maximize the possibilities for democracy, both in the pluralist sense and in my own definition—the rule of the masses—is that I believe they alone are capable of asserting the minimal, necessary social discipline upon a trade union movement trained to seek ever-expanding wage packets. Trade unions, it seems, might exercise restraint voluntarily only under conditions where major moves toward egalitarianism are under way. To ask them to practice restraint while major pockets of privilege and wealth exist, as the British Labour government is discovering, is a hopeless task. Yet, it's an open question whether democratic norms can long survive under conditions of major wage inflation and industrial strife.

Recent and continuing changes in the European working class make the prospect for a democratic transformation of the European economy and societies more and not less likely than in the past. There is an increasingly well-educated working class, pressing demands not only for a larger share of social goods but also for participation in the economy. The mass of educated white-collar workers and technicians has been radicalized and also appears to be throwing in its lot, at least in France, Italy, and Spain, with the parties of the Left. They are, after all, salaried workers who have little to fear from the socialization of the economy. One of the boundaries of an industrial democracy lies in the area of workers' participation and control, as it was first pioneered in Yugoslavia. The preconditions for workers' control, however, are infinitely superior in Western Europe, and it is there that this idea might be fleshed out and become a focus for a challenge to the rulers of both the United States and the Soviet Union. □

2. Erazim Kohák

To speak of American "power" in the wake of Vietnam seems rather inaccurate. The United States, like France in 1938 or Austro-Hungary at the turn of the century, does retain considerable economic, demographic, and perhaps even military potential. But potential is not power. It takes vision and determination to transform potential into power and, since the decimation of American progressive thought at the hands of Senator (Joseph) McCarthy, America has shown little of either. The potential is real enough, but American "power," as Vietnam has shown yet once more, is a very paper tiger.

That is something few people are eager to admit. American "power" is too useful a bogey and too precious a hope to be relinquished easily. But the debacle of Vietnam leaves no room for illusions. There the United States deployed its potential on a lavish scale, squandering lives, arms, and fortune, literally to no purpose. The purpose—the will and the

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vision—was missing. Vietnam did not fall because its people overwhelmingly "chose Communism." They could have done so, easily, long before the American intervention. Even after it, they could have risen *en masse*, for instance during the 1968 Tet offensive, and handed Hanoi the victory. They did not do so, even though the Saigon government provided them with arms, opportunities, and reasons. Instead, they fled in their thousands and continued to flee as long as there was somewhere to flee to, in the end wading out into the sea in the hope of being picked up by an American ship. Not only that; they also fought, often bravely and well. Not only the Army, which could be accused of fighting for a share of the spoils, but also the Regional and Popular Forces, who knew the risks they were taking. The people of Vietnam showed little enthusiasm for the incredibly corrupt feudal regime in Saigon, but they showed even less enthusiasm for substituting a Communist police state for it. They fled and fought, in the vague hope of an alternative that would permit them to live in peace and at least relative freedom, without the fanatic regimentation of Hanoi or the feudal oppression of Saigon.

America's betrayal of Vietnam does not lie in its final withdrawal but in its failure to offer such an alternative after arousing hope by intervening. It was not freedom and justice that the United States asked the Vietnamese to defend but an archaic autocracy compounded of the worst of native feudalism and French colonialism—no more desirable but far less viable than the disciplined autocracy to the north. Vietnam fell not because the Vietnamese were unwilling to defend a free and just alternative to Communism but because they never had such an alternative to defend. While providing arms and men, America proved incapable of providing a vision.

There is a bitter irony in this. No matter how reactionary its policy, America's freedom and affluence, disseminated throughout the world in a grotesque Hollywood caricature, is the one genuinely revolutionary factor of our time. Humans do not revolt because things are bad; they only survive and suffer. Suffering becomes unbearable only when the victims become convinced that it is unnecessary, that things could be better. It is an idea that the byzantine shabbiness of the Soviet police state cannot offer. Tyranny is nothing new: the novelty of its ideological smoke screen can impress only a handful of ambitious intellectuals. Freedom, the security of human rights, the dignity of even very relative affluence, that would be something new and a clear reason for discontent with the ageless human lot.

Not only would be, but is. That is precisely what America represents. In spite of its failures, the huddled and the revolting masses of the world still see America as bigger than life. America and the West protected by the American shield are the one image of the Promised Land, the one place where human life appears genuinely different, worth living and capable of being lived, secure from fear and want. The illusions about America are as fantastic as the price anything American, whether blue jeans, records, or chewing gum, will fetch on the black market in Moscow or Prague. Nor are they all illusions. Utopia is relative. Though the Americans, with a legacy of maximalist expectations, may be skeptical, compared to the weary repression with which petty tyrants and marginal economies constrain human life even in a relatively well developed country like Czechoslovakia, the degree of freedom, dignity, and affluence that even the most disaffected Americans take for granted do make America appear as the Promised Land.

This admiration, to be sure, does not necessarily translate into love and affection. Sometimes, as in the case of the East European young, it does. More often it translates into envy and resentment, the love-hate relationship of all have-nots to all haves. America fascinates and arouses hope by what it has—and creates resentment by what appears as an unwillingness to share it. The great drawing power of Communism is not that, with enough effort and sacrifice, a nation might end up with the same kind of regimented shabbiness the Russians have ended up with 50 years after the Bolshevik coup, but it is the hope that Communism might provide a shortcut to the dignity

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and security, the freedom and the affluence Americans take for granted. Were the Americans willing to export their freedom and affluence half as vigorously as the Soviets export their own grotesque nightmare, the striking difference in accomplishment would be decisive.

The irony and tragedy of Vietnam is that the Americans exported only their arms. The regime they supported was one they would not tolerate for a moment for themselves, with nothing to recommend it except that it was there. Yet given the deployment of American potential, Americans could have proceeded as they did in Japan after 1945. They could have insisted on at least a minimum of what they take for granted at home, on scrupulous respect for human rights, on fair labor practices, on democratic limitations of power. They could have carried out a radical land reform and provided loans for small enterprise at a fraction of the cost of defending the indefensible *status quo*. They could have offered freedom, dignity and security as a model for radical social change. The potential was there, all that was lacking was the vision, the clarity of purpose and commitment, which transforms potential into power.

On the American Left, it is fashionable to blame business interests and political conservatives for the paralyzing lack of vision. But business never claimed to be concerned with freedom and dignity. Though its long-term impact is far more revolutionary than the rhetoric of Third World demagogues, its policies are inevitably conservative. Nor do political conservatives pretend to be apostles of liberation, human rights, or social justice. They openly equate "defense of freedom" with the preservation of the *status quo*. The Left and only the Left could provide the vision. If it was lacking, it was because the Left did not provide it.

To be sure, conservatives contributed to the failure of the Left. The Left had been effectively decimated in the McCarthy years. It was just barely beginning to rediscover its soul in the civil rights movement when Vietnam erupted. It was caught confused, unprepared, and vulnerable to Stalinist manipulations.

Yet Vietnam was an opportunity as well as a challenge. American progressives could have extended the ideals of freedom and justice they were rediscovering in the civil rights movement to foreign policy. The demand for human rights was as relevant in Vietnam as in Little Rock. If anything, even more so: what was a reformist program in Arkansas would have been revolutionary in Indochina. The Left could have insisted that, as the price for military protection, Americans use their leverage in Vietnam to carry out a genuine and radical democratization of civil life and insist on respect for human rights and on at least a liberalization, if not a socialization, of the economy. Given the realities of American policy-making, the Left might not have prevailed—though with LBJ then in the White House, that is not at all obvious—but it could have saved its soul.

For that matter, it just might have saved Vietnam as well. There were opportunities, not only speculative ones, such as early and vigorous aid to Ho Chi Minh in the '40s, but clear and present ones. The aftermath of Tet '68 was one of them. The disintegration of the Saigon regime during the offensive proved the need for an alternative while the failure of the Vietnamese to rise in support of the Cong proved its feasibility—and the mass graves outside Hué its urgency. The defeat of the offensive created a breathing space: the Vietcong virtually ceased to exist as an effective force, leaving the bulk of the fighting to North Vietnamese Army units whose defection rate for a time topped even that of Saigon's weary forces. At the same time, American public opinion shifted away from an unquestioning support of the war. Had the Left spoken out in the name of freedom and justice, the American people might well have listened.

Tragically, when the Left did speak out, it had little to say about freedom and justice. Instead, it revived Chamberlain's and Daladier's old slogan and spoke of "peace," even though "peace" meant surrender to Hanoi. Its moment of greatness was its pained recognition that America was not bringing freedom and justice to Vietnam; its blindness was its

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tacit acceptance of the Stalinist premise that America could not do so—and its moral collapse was its willingness to soothe its conscience with the isolationist placebo that America had no need to do so, since the Cong would to it in its stead. The affluent youngsters who paraded on campuses with their Vietcong flags might have had illusions about the Cong, but the same cannot be said for those of their adult mentors who harrangued them about "fascist Amerika" and the "people's struggle." Fifty years after Kronstadt, after three generations of assorted Stalins, after Hungary, after Tibet, after Czechoslovakia, after two rounds of Moscow trials there simply is no excuse for illusions about Communism. Nor is there any excuse for pretending that freedom and justice can be simply a domestic matter and that the fate of the Cambodians, of Magyars, of Vietnamese, of Czechs, Slovaks, Israelis is a matter of indifference. Peace of itself is not necessarily a progressive slogan; it can also be the slogan of oppressors against the oppressed, of haves against the have-nots, of the beneficiaries of the *status quo* against those who pay the price and, as in the case of Vietnam, of aggressors against all who would resist them. Yet, from Senator (Eugene) McCarthy onward, "peace" was the only slogan the Left could offer.

So "peace" it is, or, at least, tranquillity. The decibel levels have subsided. Hanoi's writ runs unchallenged: those who fled from it and fought against it for 20 years no longer have the means of disturbing the peace by defending themselves. There is peace in Hungary, there is peace in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, there is peace in Czechoslovakia, there is peace in Poland, now there is peace in Vietnam, in Cambodia, in Laos. Where will peace come next? Perhaps in Portugal. There the Socialists, with an overwhelming popular mandate, still disturb the peace by resisting the familiar combination of arms and ideology. But peace may come: that combination is powerful, and there is no power willing to resist it. There will be that kind of peace in our time when there is no longer any power capable of resisting the arbitrary will of power-hungry demagogues and petty tyrants, and there are people who want that kind of peace. Perhaps that is why, even after Vietnam, after the oil embargo, after Czechoslovakia, and after all the successive demonstrations of America's paralysis, there are still people who profess to see the greatest threat to peace in American "power."

But the problem is not American power, only the use to which America's potential is put. A powerless America does not serve the cause of freedom. The relationship between democracy and American power is quite simple. *American power—America's economic, demographic, and military potential, used with determination and vision in defense of freedom and justice against both archaic feudalism and the modern police state—is the only force capable of assuring the survival of democracy in our time.* No amount of mystified demagoguery can change that fact.

American power, to be sure, is not a sufficient condition of freedom. Vietnam made that point. But it is a necessary condition. Wherever it was absent, the hope of freedom and justice proved unavailing. In spite of the valiant, determined efforts of the Germans in the Soviet zone in 1953, of Poles and Magyars in 1956, of Czechs and Slovaks in 1968, of Poles, again, in 1970, the repressive tyranny of Soviet-sponsored regimes in their countries has grown more rigid and stultifying than ever. The prophets of "humanistic" or "liberal" Communism invariably end on the gallows, in jail, or in exile in America. In America alone can they proclaim the ideals of such humanistic Communism freely. Even the free exploration of socialist alternatives to capitalism is possible only behind America's protective shield. In spite of America's many sins against human rights, there alone can those sins be condemned—and compensated.

Let there be no mistake about that. Freedom, in the sense of reasonably secure exercise of human rights, has been an exception rather than a rule in human history; democracy even more so. For a few generations, Greece and Rome provided them, but at most times

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and in most places, autocracy and orthodoxy have been the rule. The ideals of freedom and justice lived in the vain hope of the powerless, preserving hope and, at most, sparking an occasional uprising, doomed to failure in the face of power committed to autocracy and orthodoxy. Only with the rise of the modern West, since the Renaissance, has humankind revived the audacious idea that freedom and justice might become the principles of statehood. For all its faults, America is the clearest, most successful embodiment of that experiment. Its significance in world history is and can be that for once the contest is not one between powerless hope of freedom and powerful fact of autocracy. For once the power of autocracy must confront a countervailing power, committed to the defense of freedom. Should America become powerless, as some spokesmen on the Left, repelled by the very real misuses of American power, seem to want, or should America yield to the temptation of exchanging the ideals of freedom and justice for a "realistic" power policy, humankind would revert to the ageless confrontation of realistic power and powerless hope. The hope of democracy depends on the existence of a power committed to defend freedom and justice.

The tragedy of the past generation, illustrated anew in Vietnam, is that this is not how American power had been committed. It had been so in the past—there were Wilson's 14 Points, the Atlantic Charter, the Marshall Plan, the democratic revolution in Japan. The Truman Doctrine and the defense of Korea still represented a purposeful commitment of American power in the defense of freedom—though the subsequent policy in Greece and Korea no longer did.

The dividing line is the destruction of the American Left at the hands of the first of the two McCarthys. With the Left eliminated as a significant force in American policy, America committed its power to the defense of the *status quo*. For some parts of the world, that decision was fortunate: it enabled West Germany to build a democracy and other European countries to maintain theirs. It was less fortunate for Spain or Portugal: there the *status quo* meant Franco and Salazar, in whose departure post-McCarthy America lost all interest. It was tragic for Eastern Europe: there the *status quo* meant stabilization of Soviet imperialism. But, bereft of the guidelines for change that the vision of freedom and justice could provide, America chose to avoid all change.

The bankruptcy of the policy of maintaining the *status quo* has become increasingly evident, in spite of Mr. Kissinger's use of great power collusion in place of John Foster Dulles's great power confrontation. In spite of the outward stability of the past 20 years, a generation has passed. The world is changing, and the need for change is accumulating. The intent of that change is democratic, toward greater freedom and justice. But hopeful rebels, as in Czechoslovakia or Portugal, are hopelessly weak and vulnerable. If America chooses to use its potential in support of their aspirations, those rebellions can lead to a freer, more just world. If America chooses to use it in an attempt to prevent all change, as it did in Vietnam—or refuses to use it in the name of tranquillity—those rebellions will fall prey to the imperial ambitions of greater or lesser tyrants. It happened in Cuba. In Vietnam. Will Portugal be next?

Maintaining the *status quo* is no option, but neither is a policy of tranquillity through surrender. There are better models than Metternich and Daladier. There are Lincoln, Wilson, Truman. Foreign policy does not have to be based on obstinacy or surrender: it can be based on a commitment to freedom and justice. Even if the American political system is not applicable to countries just emerging from feudalism, human rights, freedom and justice are. Those are not "American" alone—they are universally human, embodied in a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. America can make that declaration the basis of its foreign policy.

Examples abound. In South Korea and Taiwan, the United States does not have to choose between surrender or defense of local autocrats. It can use its enormous leverage to

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press for a free and just society. It can do so in Latin America as well. In Europe, it can press for genuine détente, based on a buffer of autonomous states between the superpowers. In its dealings with the desert extortionists, the United States has the potential to insist, as a minimum, on a preferential low price for oil sold to underdeveloped countries for manufacture of fertilizers. Humankind, after all, does not aspire to more efficient repression, whatever the claims of petty tyrants and their apologists. It aspires to freedom, dignity, and justice. America can use its potential in support of that aspiration.

After the two McCarthys, that sounds like a radical proposal. The two alternatives that dominate American thought today, tranquillity through repression and tranquillity through submission, McCarthyism I and McCarthyism II, are both profoundly conservative. They are also profoundly self-defeating, condemning America to frustrated or humiliating impotence. The future of American power—*and the future of freedom with it*—depends on a rediscovery of a genuinely progressive alternative, of a policy of peace through freedom and justice.

□

3. Dennis H. Wrong

The "lessons of Vietnam" are as diverse and numerous as the biases of those seeking to draw them, even though nearly everyone, including some who were militant supporters of the war as recently as the early '70s, greeted the final Communist victories with "philosophical" resignation. Whether events in Indochina are seen as the irreversible decline of American power almost everywhere or as a temporary setback likely to encourage a bracing new realism, they will loom in the background of all future foreign policy initiatives for many years to come.

The immediate response of the Ford administration has been to urge us to "look to the future and put Vietnam behind us," "avoid recriminations," "restore national unity," and "reaffirm our commitments." In short, the lesson of Vietnam seems to be that "you can't win them all" and that this fact should not deter us from sticking to established policies and reiterating the exhortations that got us into Southeast Asia in the first place.

Recent actions have been consistent with this rhetoric. The unnecessary, mismanaged, and overpublicized use of force against Cambodia in the *Mayagüez* episode and the later gleeful attributions of Ford's gains in the Gallup poll to the affair are painfully reminiscent of the behavior that kept us in Vietnam so interminably. Defense Secretary Schlesinger's warning to North Korea and Ford's prompt resort to summitry in Europe fall into the same pattern. The United States became involved in Vietnam, deepened the involvement, and perpetuated it for so long out of a double obsession with preserving the "credibility" of American power in the world and avoiding the feared electoral consequences of withdrawal and the appearance of defeat at home. (Actually, Nixon's exploitation of the war for domestic political purposes went in its cynical manipulativeness far beyond the mere fear that getting out would cost him votes.)

Ford's and Kissinger's expressed alarm over the role of the Communist party in the new Portuguese regime also echoes the past. In early June, Ford found time to visit Spain, confer privately with Franco, and join the aging dictator in a review of troops. I cannot

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see that this trip was wise or necessary. The Iberian peninsula would seem to be the part of the world where the United States should at the present time be most concerned with keeping, as they say, "a very low profile." The Portuguese Communists and, more important, their supporters in the military government can only gain if greater plausibility is lent to the belief that the United States, CIA and all, is prepared to take any action against the new regime after having lived comfortably for so long with the right-wing dictatorship that preceded it. The Portuguese Socialists, having received the largest vote in the recent election, have sought and obtained the support of West European socialists in checking the influence of the Communists and the authoritarian tendencies of the military regime. They may well also be receiving covert support from the Italian, Spanish, and part of the French Communist parties, who do not want their own supporters alienated by the emergence of an East European type Communist regime in Portugal. A display of American influence in this situation can only reduce the effectiveness of these restraints on the Lisbon government.

In Spain, Franco is going to die soon, the struggle for succession is underway, and the Spanish Communists, far less Moscow-oriented and more like the Italian than the Portuguese CP, will be a major contender. The appearance of U.S. support for Franco's chosen heirs easily lends itself to being interpreted as intervention in this struggle. Why make a free gift of the CIA card as a rhetorical weapon to the most intransigent and authoritarian forces on the Left?

The chief lesson of Vietnam is that it is futile and ultimately self-defeating to make a binding political-military commitment to corrupt governments that lack popular support and are able to stay in power only by persecuting their political opponents and exploiting their ties to foreign patrons. Neither the Diem nor the Ky-Thieu regimes entirely eliminated a free press or organized political opposition, but the very coexistence of democratic forms with rigged elections and the jailing of tens of thousands of non-Communist opponents served further to discredit them within South Vietnam and abroad. And, of course, the Lon Nol government in Cambodia was never anything but a flimsy American puppet state. The corrupt and unsteady authoritarianism of these regimes, headed so often by those who formerly collaborated with the French, was never a match for the disciplined totalitarianism of North Vietnam and the Khmer Rouge.

The United States, as is now generally acknowledged, should never have given support to the French back in the 1950s. The deepening American involvement made the "domino theory," supposedly the justification for becoming involved, self-fulfilling by giving the other side a monopoly of the symbols of nationalism and anti-imperialism. Nothing ventured, nothing lost: if the U.S. had walked away in time as in China in the 1940s and at the time of Dien Bien Phu, it would not have been discredited by going down to defeat in association with the Thieus and the Lon Nols after waging an ugly and brutal war in an area where no vital American interests were at stake.

But once committed, the U.S. could have insisted on a broadening of the Saigon government to include opposition groups and on the preservation of minimal civil liberties. The United States built up Diem and, at the very least, acquiesced in his overthrow. The notion that we were somehow debarred from "interfering" in the "internal affairs" of an ally was absurd when our military effort was devastating much of the country. All the U.S. had to do was to be prepared to pick up its marbles and go home unless its conditions for a representative coalition government were met.

Two insecure presidents, preoccupied with domestic and world opinion and only fleetingly attentive to the actual situation in Vietnam, were not up to doing this; so we stuck with Thieu to the bitter end. But these might-have-beens are worth considering even at this late date, because, whatever the dubious wisdom of the original commitment, the events of the past two years do not negate the *possibility* that

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a more representative and honorable government in Saigon might have successfully resisted the North Vietnamese. Even under Thieu, South Vietnam held out for two years after the Paris agreements, much longer than had been expected. In the end conventional armed forces invading from the North rather than internal subversion overwhelmed South Vietnam. Those civilians who fled southward by the hundreds of thousands after the breakthrough in the north were not, I believe, fleeing in irrational panic but were seeking to escape from Communist rule for they knew its realities well enough to wish to avoid them. Possibly, they preferred, however inarticulately, the freedom to risk starvation in the muddle and corruption of the South to a regimented security under Hanoi.

Joseph Kraft reported in a recent column that, in a speech to the Japan Society in New York, Kissinger said, "We have learned the important lessons from the tragedy of Vietnam," and proceeded to specify these lessons as that "outside effort can only supplement, but not create local efforts and local will to resist" and that "the essential underpinning" of resistance to subversion lies in "popular will and justice." Kraft assured his readers that this speech was not merely rhetorical or tactical but that, in Kraft's words, "while trying to maintain the balance, the U.S. would not uncritically embrace the dictatorial regime of President Park of South Korea—or even the corrupt governments of President Marcos in the Philippines and General Suharto in Indonesia."

One hopes that Kraft is right to take this speech seriously, although there is little in the American post-Vietnam record to suggest that he is. Perhaps General Park's truculent defense of his suspension of civil liberties and jailing of his elected critics in South Korea was a response to more than a few *New York Times* editorials. Even if Kissinger has truly seen the light, I am doubtful that the joy with which we are enjoined to greet prodigal sons should extend to applauding his continued tenure as secretary of state and chief architect of American foreign policy. He has just too much to live down: the "tilt" to Pakistan, then engaged in the most genocidal action committed by any nation since the death of Stalin; the support of the Greek colonels; the undermining of Allende's government in Chile and the ready acceptance of the junta that overthrew it and ended Chilean democracy; and the persisting friendly relations with other right-wing dictatorships in Spain, Portugal, and Brazil.

But this sad record long antedates Kissinger, of course. I have never believed that the United States favored rightist dictatorships as a matter of principle, although American left-liberals have repeatedly accused it of doing so since the very beginnings of the Cold War. I remember arguing in the late 1940s with a Henry Wallace supporter that there was not necessarily anything morally compromising in dealing with Spain for bases that might be necessary for the defense of Europe, since the Franco dictatorship was a fossilized survivor of the worldwide defeat of fascism and offered no conceivable threat or appeal to anyone outside its borders. However, when the United States in the name of containing Communism expanded its commitments beyond Europe to Asia, Africa, and Latin America, what had once been an exception became the rule: the most faithful American clients turned out to be rightist military cliques and elderly princelings with little popular support, eager to hang on to power by exploiting the American connection, and pliant to our wishes in everything but their unreadiness to democratize their governments and carry out social reforms that would reduce their own privileges.

There were a few signs that the Kennedy administration was beginning to recognize the costs of a *Realpolitik* that cast the United States in the role of a counterrevolutionary and antidemocratic force in the world: the Alliance for Progress; economic aid to a few left-wing governments such as Jagan's in Guyana; actions taken to prevent the Trujillo family from making a comeback in the Dominican Republic, and stronger and warmer support for democratic Israel than in the Eisenhower years—

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not to speak of Kennedy's reported privately expressed determination to withdraw from Vietnam once he had won reelection. Outrageous though the methods may have been, there was also the complicity in Diem's overthrow and the assassination of Trujillo—engineered by the CIA or not, it can at least be said of the latter that it couldn't have happened to a more deserving fellow! But all these halting steps toward a more enlightened policy came to nothing when Johnson, who had hailed Diem as "The Churchill of Asia," became president and the indefensible intervention in the Dominican Republic and the escalation of the Vietnam War shortly followed.

The response of much of the Left to recent events has hardly been encouraging. I don't mean the sectarian remnants of the "old" New Left, but its more respectable and trendy heirs secure in the academy and the media. Anti-American *Schadenfreude* has endowed many of them with a versatility in Orwellian doublethink as skilled as that exhibited by the fellow-travelers of the 1930s. Writers for *Ramparts* and the *Village Voice*, for example, have joyously proclaimed that the whole world outside the United States is "going socialist," one of them from Lisbon where he exulted in the exciting revolutionary atmosphere some weeks *after* the elections that had been followed by the suppression of the one newspaper supporting the Socialists, who had received the largest vote. The enforced evacuation of the urban population of Cambodia did not faze a liberal columnist who wrote smugly that the reported shocked response of Ford and Kissinger simply showed that they were incapable of understanding the deep commitment of the Khmer Rouge to building "agrarian communism"—as if the driving of 3 million people, including the old and the sick, on foot into the countryside at the cost of many lives could be construed benignly by those with a bit of ideological sophistication. Shirley MacLaine, defending her movie celebrating China, equated, presumably with a straight face, the teaching of Christianity in American parochial schools with the compulsory indoctrination of all Chinese schoolchildren in "the thoughts of Chairman Mao." Such fashionable folly and willed blindness are, to be sure, only an echo of those with which we have been familiar in the past, but they confirm that many affluent left-wing intellectuals are not so much "dupes" of totalitarianism as half-conscious admirers of its ruthlessness.

Depressing as this is, it probably has little long-run historical significance. The end of the American Empire would have come, though less ignominiously, even without Vietnam. This does not mean the end of American power in the world, however wishfully some on the Left may think this so, and whatever the concern, real or pretended, over a new isolationism on the part of our leaders. The belief that the United States might become an active supporter of democratic revolutions around the world, long held by much of the liberal-left community, was never a very realistic one. It also had a darker side in that, although promulgated most vigorously by critics of the Cold War, it influenced liberals in power and played a major part in contributing to the illusions that led to disaster in Indochina. Vietnam was indeed originally a "liberals' war." As far back as the early '50s, when the Eisenhower administration was in office, U.S. missions in Saigon were manned by well-educated and idealistic young men who believed that the United States could create a "Third Force" opposed both to colonialism and Communism. This was clearly seen at the time by Graham Greene with its full potential for catastrophe in *The Quiet American*, not a great novel but a prophetic one.

The United States remains, of course, a major factor in the Middle East, but the lack of an active American "presence" influencing the events that will shape the immediate future elsewhere in the world is notable: Portugal, the coming succession struggles in China, Spain, and Yugoslavia, the crisis in India, and the course of Soviet-Chinese relations. One may modestly hope that the sheer number of these critical and possibly unpleasant developments over which the United States has no control

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will have a chastening effect on our leaders. And the exploitation of anti-Americanism, focusing on the alleged role of the CIA, will be less of a factor in the various coming conflicts.

I have never believed that *vox populi* amounts to *vox dei*, but one of the few hopeful things in the world in the past year or so has been the response of voters in a number of countries. Most of all, of course, in Portugal, where the people gave nearly two-thirds of their votes to the parties of the democratic Left, thoroughly repudiating both the Communists and the military government's campaign for blank ballots. Then there is the British electorate, which voted overwhelmingly to stay in the Common Market with every major group—sex, age, class, region—rejecting the anti-European demagoguery of the Labour Left and the Tory Right. At home, the swift turn of public opinion against Richard Nixon that ultimately drove him from office remains a happy recent memory and one notes also that Wallace's support has begun to drop in the opinion polls, despite the continuing disposition of some publicists and supposed political experts to make much of it.

Then there are those who are able only to vote with their feet, as the saying goes. The flight of the peasants during the collapse of South Vietnam's armies reminds us that nowhere in the world are there, nor have there ever been, masses of people clamoring to get into rather than out of any Communist country anywhere. East Germany still needs the Berlin Wall. There is still a weekly trickle of people from Mainland China into Hong Kong. The threat of the possible establishment of a Communist regime has deterred Portuguese immigrant workers in Western Europe from going home. Far below the politics of détente, these realities remain unchanged. "Anti-Communism is not enough"—that is certainly the major lesson of Vietnam. But there is no evidence that Communist regimes, even in the new variety they exhibit, have become more attractive to the peoples of the world. They, at least, do not behave as if they thought that freedom and democracy were obsolete. □

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Rose Laub Coser

Affirmative Action

Letter to a Worried Colleague

Dear Colleague:

I am glad you agree with me that discrimination against women in employment generally, and in the academy in particular, has to end; and that the socialization process, by which women are directed away from the world of work and productivity, ought to be changed. Yet you are reluctant to join in affirmative action to reach these ends. You are worried lest affirmative action represent a "quota system" with its implied injustice precisely against minorities; and you fear that some deserving white males, innocent of the past misdeeds that have caused our present distress, might be hurt.

I want to take issue with this interpretation and hope that I shall be able to convince you that you should join us in our efforts for affirmative action.

1. To liken "numerical goals" for ending discrimination against women and blacks to "quotas" is a fallacy. The assertion is made not only by honest people who want to be at peace with their own conscience but also by those who use it as a scare word for propagandistic purposes. It muddles the issue. Quotas are meant to keep people out. Numerical goals, in contrast, are meant to get people in. That is, quotas are meant to keep people out on one extraneous criterion, *whether or not they otherwise qualify for the main requirements for entrance*; numerical goals are meant to get people in *who do qualify for the main requirements for entrance, and who would be kept out otherwise for reasons that are not pertinent to the performance that is sought*. In short, numerical goals are meant to end the very type of discrimination quotas perpetuate. It is facile to say that, because in both cases numbers are at stake, the cases have the same meaning. It seems to me those of us who have spent a lifetime analyzing in our work the more complex meaning of social processes, rather than accepting what is seemingly obvious, owe it to our intellectual integrity to use more sophisticated thinking in our ideological stance as well.

2. It is contrary to the facts to assert that educational institutions (just like others) use no numerical considerations for admission to their ranks, even when "quotas" have been given up officially. For example, we know that many colleges and universities reserve a certain proportion of admissions for regional representation. A student from Nebraska has a better chance to get into Harvard than one from New York, "everything else being equal." I remember seeing (before the days of affirmative action) admissions lists to Harvard Medical School that included some students with a C average (white men, of course). Universities routinely reserve a certain proportion of places for offspring of alumni even with a lower academic record than otherwise permissible. There is a "good" reason for this, as there is a "good" reason for regional representation. As you and I well know, together these

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two measures assure both perpetuation of the elite and the maintenance of some "openness" to permit some social integration—the perfect amalgam for an open-class society.

You may object that I am speaking about student admissions, and not about recruitment of faculty. My reply is: (a) the academic child is the father of the academic man (and I am claiming that mothers and academic women should take their turns); (b) recruitment of faculty proceeds on a similar basis as the admission of students, only the process is even more secret and subtle. You have read Caplow's and McGee's *Academic Market Place*, as I have.

3. The point I have been making means, of course, that numerical considerations other than those for academic excellence are being introduced routinely in regard to issues that are considered socially or politically pertinent. All we are saying is that there are other considerations than the aforementioned ones that also have such pertinence. I am asking you to agree that it is as important to integrate blacks and women as it is to integrate people from peripheral areas of the country.

4. There is no evidence for the claim that the level of excellence is being threatened through numerical goals. In your scholarly work you would never make statements that have no evidential basis, but you (and many others) feel free to do so in ideological matters. I know of no department that has suffered in excellence by adding women or blacks to its faculty.

(Of course, too few women or blacks have been added anywhere to test the proposition. According to the Chronicle of Higher Education for February 10, 1975, the proportion of women in faculty jobs in the country as a whole, and in all ranks, has increased from 22.3 percent in 1972–73 to 24.1 percent in 1974, and that of full professors has increased from 9.8 percent to 10.3 percent during that time. We know that for blacks there is even less progress).

I would like to argue the contrary, namely that affirmative action, instead of threatening excellence, will help achieve it. Here is how: affirmative action means open search. Faculty and administrators are to devise means of recruitment that are objective and universalistic, that transcend the old-boys-club way of doing things. After a thorough search has been conducted, the best qualified person—a white male if he is the one—should be hired. Departments are asked to demonstrate that such a search has been conducted and that the person who is being hired is indeed the best one obtainable. I propose that if this were taking place, departments would hire better men *or* women for their faculties. Much of the mediocrity that exists comes from particularism, as you well know. For example, there might be less protection of the inept if an organization were not permitted to "promote" some of its undesirable faculty members into the administration but were forced to search for the best possible administrators at all levels.

5. For affirmative action to be effective it cannot, of course, take the shape it took at Berkeley, where bureaucratic number games did more to maintain the *status quo* than to change it. If one takes presently available "pools" as a guideline for future recruitment, as was done at Berkeley, nothing much is going to change and the spirit of affirmative action is destroyed. One would have to set goals for recruitment at all levels of education (I am pleased that you agree with me that societal definitions of appropriate occupational sex roles should be changed) and then project, as demographers do, the possible changes in pools in the various fields for the next 10 years. This would be more realistic and more creative and would also prevent people from passing the buck of ending discrimination to a lower level. My friend Cynthia Epstein has called my attention to the fact that by tracing the "horrors" of sex discrimination to earlier periods in the socialization process, many people feel free to abandon efforts for change in their own bailiwick. If goals were formulated in terms of numerical changes at all levels, professors would have to go to work in their graduate departments and among their under-

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graduates and exert pressures, for example in teachers colleges and departments of education, for changes in the high schools and elementary schools.

6. You are worried about being "unfair to specific individuals." I would like to warn you against those who come to you to ask for your sympathy in the name of "excellence," when what they are complaining about is competition. You must have experienced, as I have, some white man whom you respect saying to you: "I have been a victim of affirmative action." A chairperson who gives this as a rationale for rejecting an applicant or for refusing tenure finds this easier to do than to say, "you have disagreed with me," or, "you are not congenial," or, "you are not good enough." And I suspect that the affirmative action argument is not being misused without malice aforethought. Also, it strikes me as sheer arrogance for a white male to assume that because a black or a woman was hired in his stead, the standard of excellence must have been relaxed. Could it be otherwise, perhaps?

Yet, some white men may indeed get hurt when they would deserve not to be. Let me speak to this point next.

7. Every policy will hurt some people who do not deserve to be hurt. This is true of the tenure system in academia as it is of the seniority system in industry. On the microlevel, one hurts some people with every decision that is made at a committee meeting, as you and I well know. On the macrolevel, one hurts some people with every piece of social change one helps bring about. After all, there would be less resistance to change both in our organizations and in society at large if people would not fear, rightfully so, that some of their rights and privileges—deserved as they may be—might be abrogated.

I am reminded of the words of a well-known author and philosopher, whom we both know but who shall remain unnamed. When asked to join the picket line in front of stores during the civil rights campaign in the early '60s, he hesitated to do so because, he said, if the picketing is effective in keeping customers away this might lead to the firing of innocent salesgirls. Yet the same man had defended only a few years earlier the Soviet intervention in Hungary with the argument that "the building of the British empire cost innumerably more lives than Soviet interference in Hungary." While I reject such rhetoric and believe that we should always be most cautious in dealing with human lives, whether or not they are in our own camp, some sacrifices sometimes cannot be avoided.

8. Implicit in some of the arguments I have heard about men being hurt by affirmative action is the notion that it is worse for a man not to find employment than for a woman, because a man has to support a family. I hear: "He has a wife and a new baby and can't find a job because the department has to hire a woman or a black." (Note that no department *has* to hire a woman or black unless they are the best persons for the job.) Such reasoning obfuscates the distinction between two different kinds of human needs. "Need" may arise from circumstances over which individuals have no control, or from circumstances that have resulted from an individual's own choice. People who are born in the ghetto "need" support but somebody who chooses to buy a Cadillac should not expect support or even sympathy for having to make high monthly payments. Supporting a wife and having a child is an option, one that is expected to give pleasure, and may well be a luxury. Such options do not need to be compensated for or rewarded, as if they were a congenital or social handicap or a service to the country.

To Our Contributors

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- And please also be sure to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. —THE EDITORS

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9. There may also be compensations for men who might feel hurt by affirmative action. Looked at from the point of view of a collectivity (for example the family) instead of from the point of view of the individual, for every husband who does not find a job there may be a wife who does. If we were not so hung up on the notion that the man has to support his family, nothing much would be changed; that is, if one talks of family rather than individual income.

10. This leads to my final point. Suppose we are successful in our endeavors, including those aimed at motivating women and blacks to enter the fields that traditionally have been occupied by white males. In the unlikely event that 50 years from now men and women seek and receive equal employment at all levels, there will have been some reshaping of the opportunity structure. Is this really so terrible? It is terrible only if one maintains the view that men have to be the providers of their families. But many men may want to enjoy temporary or permanent periods of staying home, just as many women do today, and this could be a privilege rather than a sacrifice. The main point here is that it requires a redefinition of the division of labor and the prestige structure in the family and society generally.

Our endeavors to bring about equality between men and women are not simply aimed at a few more jobs for some women, but at restructuring the family; and this, of course, means restructuring the society. May I suggest that this is what most people who object to affirmative action are afraid of? You, an old-time socialist, are of course not one of them. □

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John P. Diggins

Buckley's Comrades

The Ex-Communist as Conservative

I

When the *National Review* celebrates its 20th anniversary this November, conservatives may salute its editor with the toast: "You've come a long way, Buckley." Among the associate editors, consultants, and contributors another toast might be made, this time raised, perhaps after the third glass of champagne, as a nostalgic question: "Where were you in '32?" Buckley's comrades have also come a long way.

It is remarkable how many of the *National Review* writers are "twice-born" ideologues, conservative minds haunted by radical memories. At one time or another Buckley's stable of editors and contributors included former members of the Communist party (Frank Meyer and William Schlamm), crypto-Communists and notorious socialists (Whittaker Chambers and J. B. Matthews), banished Lovestoneites and half-way Shachtmanites (Will Herberg and James Burnham), early supporters of the Soviet Union (William H. Chamberlin and Eugene Lyons), radical novelists and Marxist literary theoreticians (John Dos Passos and Eliseo Vivas), fellow-travelers and Greenwich Village Leninists (Freda Utley and Max Eastman), Trotsky sympathizers (Suzanne LaFollette and Morrie Ryskind), little-known radical partisans (Frank Chodorov and Ralph de Toledano), and well-known radical critics of native American progressivism (John Chamberlain and Henry L. Hazlitt). Obviously, the experience of Stalinism pressed like a tumor on the brain of a whole generation of writers who came of political age between 1917 and 1939. Over a quarter-century ago Ignazio Silone prophesied accurately the intellectual consequences of Stalinism in Crossman's collection *The God That Failed:* "The final struggle will be between the Communist and the ex-Communist."

Among the writers who made the journey from one end of the political spectrum to the other, four in particular stand out as ideological curiosities: Max Eastman, the poet-philosopher of lyrical rebellion and scientific experiment; John Dos Passos, the novelist of anarcho-individualist sensibilities; Will Herberg, the anguished theologian of moral man in immoral society; and James Burnham, the theorist of power in a universe of protracted conflict.

The flamboyant Eastman embodied the adventurous innocence of flesh and spirit that has characterized various generations of American rebels. He was the "fair-haired apostle" of the Greenwich Village Left, the cultural rebellion that invoked the Dionysian spirit of youth, love, poetry, and heroism. When the Bolsheviks seized power, Eastman rhapsodized Lenin's achievements in *The Liberator,* and after 1924 he became Trotsky's best literary translator and staunch defender.

> I supported every step [he boasted to Trotsky in 1933] taken by the Bolshevik party and by you and Lenin from the seizure of power and the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (horrible to all other American editors) to the condemnation of the Social Revolutionaries. I was for six years alone in America in supporting the Left Opposition. I *was* the Left Opposition.

Eastman had indeed done more than any writer

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of his generation to celebrate and explain communism to a hostile American public. Yet two decades later the man who had once claimed to be the "Left Opposition" was the very person William F. Buckley turned to for advice in starting a national magazine to champion the conservative cause. Is Eastman's career a case of *La trahison des clercs,* or can a man who moved from Left to Right still be fighting the same fight?

Similar questions can be asked of Dos Passos, the angry young novelist who once, as a gentle, shy undergraduate, advocated blowing up the Widener Library and the Harvard Business School. Indeed, the early Dos Passos seems like a Weatherman-of-the-pen. When World War I broke out, his thoughts exploded in a Bakuninite fantasy. "My only hope is in revolution—in wholesale assassination of all statesmen, capitalists, war-mongers, jingoists, inventors, scientists. ... My only refuge from the deepest depression is in dreams of vengeful guillotines." As an ambulance driver on the Italian front, Dos Passos saw the war as a "ridiculous farce" that only the "progressives" took seriously as a noble cause. "Like the Jews at their wailing place, the Liberals cover their heads with their robes of integrity and wail, wail, wail—God, I'm tired of wailing. I want to assassinate."

Dos Passos's rebellious fury reemerged again in 1927, when the Sacco-Vanzetti execution left him reeling with horror and indignation. "We stand defeated America," he later recorded in *USA;* "all right, we are two nations." Although Dos Passos never joined the Communist party, he lent his name to its causes and participated in Communist-led strikes. "However much we may cavil at the Communists," he wrote in 1932, "they mean it when they say they are fighting for socialism, i.e., the cooperative commonwealth." And Roosevelt's New Deal? "The upshot of it," he told Edmund Wilson the following year, "is that you and I and the Forgotten Man are going to get fucked plenty."

Thirty years after Dos Passos uttered these thoughts he was given a "Freedom Award" along with Senator Strom Thurmond, economist Ludwig Von Mises, actor John Wayne, and other messiahs of the new American Right. He also became one of Nixon's staunchest supporters during the Vietnam War, informing his daughter that the President "deserves acclaim" for "having the courage" to order the invasion of Cambodia. No one was more puzzled by Dos Passos's conservative positions than the great literary critic Edmund Wilson, who tried to sum up the meaning of his friend's career in a simple couplet:

> On account of Soviet knavery
> He favors restoring slavery.

The ideological career of Will Herberg is equally puzzling. Herberg became a Marxist revolutionary, youth organizer, and *Daily Worker* contributor in the early '20s when the Communist party was being hounded by the forces of law and order. An intense, learned young philosophy student, Herberg devoted his entire being to the world of ideas, rising to every intellectual challenge at a time when theoretical matters were usually settled by a cablegram from Moscow. He attempted to reconcile Marxism and Einstein's relativity physics, correct Edmund Wilson's views on proletarian literature, and argue with Sidney Hook over the textual validity of Marx's ambivalent position on revolution. He conceived his mission as that of the philosopher who would hasten the revolution by explicating the meaning of dialectical materialism and the theory of Leninism. Less than a decade later this same writer would be explicating fervently the meaning of sin, despair, *Angst,* and dread, the existential anxiety of "finitude" and the tragedy of the "human condition." As a Marxist, Herberg had dismissed religion as the illusion of the oppressed. When he now spoke as a conservative, God came alive in almost every utterance. Abandoning revolution for revelation, Herberg found his way to the *National Review* by way of Buber and Niebuhr. Even in the early '50s no one could have predicted that the author of *Judaism and Modern Man,* who still defended in existential terms a "theologically grounded socialism," would align himself with Buckley, who

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wanted to rescue God from the Niebuhrians and get Him back into Yale University.

The career of James Burnham represents an equally strange odyssey. In the '30s he became one of the leading intellectual exponents of Leon Trotsky, absorbing the doctrine of permanent revolution, reformism as "petty-bourgeois impotence," and the Fourth International as the true embodiment of the October Revolution. Toward the end of the decade, when many radical intellectuals began to sense a "crisis in Marxism," Burnham admonished them for faltering in their belief. In "Intellectuals in Retreat," an essay in a 1939 issue of the *New International*, Burnham and Max Shachtman scrupulously analyzed the presuppositions of every important American writer who had turned away from revolutionary Marxism. Only a year later Burnham himself broke with Trotsky, repudiated Marxism, and pronounced the socialist revolution a foolish daydream. This was but the first of a series of surprising turns in Burnham's political career that left both admirers and critics dumbfounded. In the '40s he first calmly predicts the collapse of the Soviet Union and the victory of fascist Germany and Japan (*The Managerial Revolution*, 1941); he next sets out to prove that democracy and freedom are "myths" (*The Machiavellians*, 1943); and he then proceeds to explain why Stalin must be recognized as a "genius" who, instead of betraying the revolution as Trotsky insisted, had actually "fulfilled" it ("Lenin's Heir," *Partisan Review*, 1945). After the war, he advocates military force to resist the Stalinism he had just recently described as historically inevitable, and he now calls upon Americans and Europeans to fight for democratic ideals that he had dismissed as theoretically unrealizable (*The Struggle for the World*, 1947). With the Cold War, Burnham emerged as a diplomatic theoretician of the Right, a leading nuclear confrontationist. At the time of the Korean War, his writings had considerable influence in the State Department, the Pentagon, and the Central Intelligence Agency, especially among those officials who sought to oppose the policy of containment with a new strategy of "liberation-rollback." This was the same James Burnham whom Lionel Abel, Dwight Macdonald, and George Orwell had described in the '40s as "Stalin's advocate."

Here we have, then, four gifted but diverse men who made the peculiar migration from the revolutionary Left to the militant Right, without so much as pausing at the "Vital Center." What common impulses or reactions underlie their flight from one extreme to the other? If, indeed, "the extremes touch," what forms the bridge between them?

II

The New Left was inclined to look upon the Old Left as shallow "Marxists-of-the-heart" whose reluctance to go to the root of things represented a generational failure of nerve.[1] The charge that the American Left is politically feeble because it is intellectually sterile cannot serve as an explanation for either the failure of the Left or its deradicalization. On the contrary, Herberg tried to assimilate quantum physics and dialectical materialism before the European Left dared touch the subject; Dos Passos wrote the masterpiece *USA*, hailed by Sartre as the first modern literary effort to anatomize the totality of industrial society and to capture, through the "indeterminancy of detail," the disassociation of experience; Burnham developed the theory of managerial domination long before Milovan Djilas discovered the "new class" and C. Wright Mills the "power elite"; and Eastman, in his debates with Sidney Hook over Hegelianism, uncovered epistemological problems in Marxism that would be faced a quarter-century later by such important European philosophers as Louis Althusser and Jurgen Habermas.

If our four neoconservatives cannot be characterized as superficial intellects, neither can they be categorized as distinctive psychological types whose politics reflect "personality needs." There are no common character traits among them: Dos Passos feared power, Burn-

[1]Cristiano Camporesi, *Il marxismo teorico negli USA, 1900–1945* (Milan, 1973).

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ham was fascinated by it; Eastman claimed that "lust is sacred" and scorned all religions (including Buckley's Catholicism), while Herberg wanted most to be delivered from sin. Nor can one point to historical experience as an explanation for deradicalization. Bertrand Russell and Eastman, for example, both repudiated Soviet communism for its philosophical dogmatism and political despotism and in turn supported their own democratic governments; but while Russell, after World War II, went on to become a fiery critic of America's postwar anti-Communist interventions,. Eastman became a Cold War militant. The same pattern of agreement and divergence is true of Dos Passos and Orwell. Both writers went through almost exactly the same trial of faith on the battlefields of Spain, and each came away convinced more than ever that the language of politics must be rescued from the enemies of freedom. Yet while Orwell could become a severe critic of both Kremlin "doublethink" and Burnhamite *Realpolitik,* Dos Passos came to believe that he could be anti-Communist without questioning the warfare state created by the Cold War.

If quality of mind, psychological temperament, and historical experience do not serve as explanations, what then separated the ex-Communist who would become a conservative from those who would become or remain anti-Stalinist liberals and social democrats? Basically there were three issues: the debate over the means to be used in the struggle against postwar Communist totalitarianism, the McCarthyism controversy, and the residue of antiliberalism that remained in the thought of a former Leninist (Eastman), a former anarchist (Dos Passos), a former Lovestoneite (Herberg), and a former Trotskyist (Burnham).

On the eve of America's entry into the war Eastman tried to formulate a distinction between the chastened exradical and the faithful socialist. "The real difference between us and you, in my opinion, is this," he stated in a debate with James T. Farrell in *Partisan Review:* "In a period when certain means we had all agreed upon for emancipating the working class, and therewith all society, have proved to lead in the opposite direction, we have remained loyal to the aim, you to the means."

Eastman returned to this distinction at the end of the war in an exchange with Dwight Macdonald in *Politics* over communism in Greece. At the beginning of the Cold War the distinction had some plausibility. The basic issue was whether, as Macdonald and the remaining Old Left had hoped, there existed the possibility of a mass alternative to both Stalinism and capitalism, or whether, as Eastman believed, popular, democratic movements stood a better chance of success struggling within spheres of the British and American empires. The choice of strategy was indeed crucial, but looking back, the entire history of the subsequent Cold War casts some doubt on both propositions.

As events in Eastern Europe would demonstrate, no democratic movement against Soviet totalitarianism had a chance of success; and as events in Asia and Latin America would demonstrate, no Marxist movement against British and American hegemony succeeded without a Leninist-modeled party dictatorship. The tragic fate of Jan Masaryk foreshadowed the equally tragic fate of Salvatore Allende. Czechoslovak democracy was "subverted," Chilean democracy "destabilized." Thus if Macdonald's dream could not be realized, neither could Eastman's distinction be maintained. The ex-Communist may have revised his "means" for "emancipating" society from oppression, and doubtless Eastman originally was urging the Left to see the imperative of democratic processes and the disaster of "proletarian dictatorships." But as the Cold War spread to the Third World, conservative anti-communism became an end in itself, to be realized by any means possible, even by the despots and juntas of the "free world" whom Dos Passos defended just before he died in 1970. Against Castro and Allende the CIA served the historical function of Lenin's "vanguard," the conspiratorial will of the counter-revolution. The burden of demonstrating how undemocratic means can lead to democratic ends—the very challenge that Dewey put to

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Trotsky in 1938—must now be assumed by the ex-Communist conservative.

The conservative does not begrudge that burden; he relishes it. The Cold War is the great moral drama of our time, and the choice of allies the test of integrity. On what grounds, then, can the conservative defend an undemocratic regime that violates the principles of free government? One may do so, Buckley and Burnham have been arguing recently in the *National Review,* because it is far more likely that a national populace can rise against and topple a right-wing autocracy than a left-wing dictatorship. Recent events in Portugal and Greece, when compared to the total political and cultural suppression of Eastern Europe and China, suggest that the conservative argument has some historical validity. But the *National Review*'s position is about as persuasive as Trotsky's appeal to the American Left at the outbreak of World War II to support Stalin's Russia in order better to defeat Stalinism.

Buckley and Burnham supported the Greek junta because supposedly it alone was capable of resisting a Communist takeover; they then maintained that the collapse of the junta proves that the Right is responsive to popular pressures and therefore preferable to the Left, even though the collapse then risks what the Right set out to prevent—a Communist seizure of power. The *National Review* thus must look to a radical Left to prove by the strength of its insurrectionary actions why a conservative Right cannot become a permanent dictatorship. For without such a Left as an opposition force, the lesson the *National Review* must ponder is this: if there is one historical experience rarer than a right-wing dictatorship achieving the genuine social progress necessary to defeat communism, it is a right-wing dictatorship transforming itself into a genuine democracy. And if the *National Review* supports a right-wing regime that has as its aim the suppression of the democratic Left, one can only conclude, by the magazine's own logic and by Eastman's distinction between being "loyal to the aim" rather than to the means, that the conservative is on the wrong side of the barricades.

THE SECOND ISSUE which separated the anti-Communist conservative from the anti-Stalinist liberal or socialist was McCarthyism. The writers who found their way to Buckley's *National Review* all supported McCarthy's inquisition and the efforts of congressional committees to purge former Russian sympathizers and Fifth Amendment witnesses. Eastman, Dos Passos, Herberg, and Burnham may have been uncomfortable with McCarthy's "methods," but they felt strongly that the Senator saw communism in its proper perspective—not as a response to economic backwardness but as an internal conspiracy of assassins. More than anything else it was the McCarthy controversy that split the ranks of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, dividing the militant anti-Communist from the liberal intelligentsia.

> I am fairly well convinced that most of the committee members are willing to take a firm position on McCarthyism [wrote Richard Rovere to Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. in 1952], but I also know that taking the position would result in a split of some sort. I can understand the reluctance of Hook and some of the other founding members to allow this to happen, but I think it would be really an excellent thing. People like Max Eastman don't give a damn about cultural freedom. ... His intellectual home is the *Freeman*. ... That, it seems to me, is clearly the place for anyone who can call McCarthy a "Clear-headed patriot of freedom."

However Eastman might have responded to Rovere's private letter, the young Buckley would have agreed. For the goal of cultural freedom or even political freedom had nothing to do with the issue of McCarthyism, which was not about freedom but "conformity." McCarthyism, Buckley and L. Brent Bozell argued in *McCarthy and His Enemies,* represented a "consensus," a widely shared conviction that communism posed a threat to American values and that therefore Communists and Communist sympathizers should be ostracized from public life and liberals should be exposed as "atheistic, soft-headed, [and] anti-anti-Communist."

In truth, the real question was not whether

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communism posed a threat to American values—clearly the position of the ACCF—but whether McCarthyism was merely a matter of posture rather than principle, a stance that enabled the politician to be against liberalism without necessarily being against *real* communism. The career of McCarthyism's finest creation, Richard Milhouse Nixon, indicates strongly that the ACCF intellectuals were right in saying that anticommunism in America had become an expedient political issue rather than a deep moral commitment. Buckley's *National Review* supported Nixon as Eisenhower's choice to stay on as vice-president in the election of 1956, and that support was based on the single-minded conviction that Nixon was an authentic anti-Communist and nothing else really matters. As John Chamberlain explained the case, Nixon, while shifty on economic issues, possessed an "intellectual understanding of Marxism in both its theoretical and practical aspects," displayed "a clear perception of the nature of Communist dynamism in international affairs," and was, despite all the talk of "Tricky Dick," a "rather open young man with decent impulses."[2]

All this might suggest that conservatives need to choose their comrades a little more carefully. Buckley claimed that McCarthy's enemies were "soft" on communism, but it was McCarthy's friends who would fear the Red presumably under the bed more than the Red who was actually in it. Indeed, if one surveys the heritage of McCarthyism in the 1970s, one finds a disturbing consistency between the past tactic of McCarthyite slander and the present strategy of Moscow summit, between the old witch-hunter and the new fellow-traveler. In Nixon's heralded détente with Russia and China, one sees that a politician nurtured on McCarthyism can be anti-Communist without being antitotalitarian; in the Watergate affair, one sees that an administration founded on "law and order" can resort to illegal and quasi-totalitarian methods allegedly to protect the "free world"; and in the Moscow negotiations of July 1974, one sees why a chief of state who tried to silence the American press can stand idly by while Soviet authorities pull the cables on American journalists trying to report on Russian dissidents.

It is the cruelest irony of the Cold War that Nixon did more than any other modern statesman to bestow legitimacy on Communist China and Russia. The irony is compounded when one considers that détente itself is an exercise in the very Machiavellian power politics that Burnham had once believed essential to the defeat of the Communist world. Henry Kissinger now recognizes what Dean Acheson could never get Americans to recognize: the reality of the status quo. And President nonelect Gerald Ford can tell students at Ohio State University what no liberal president would think of mentioning: that Red China deserves America's respect because of the regime's "discipline." Forty years ago it was the Stalinists who extolled the virtues of "discipline" in Russia while Eastman was renouncing the Soviet Union because of its betrayal of those social reforms and cultural freedoms that had inspired the Greenwich Village Left:

> education, prison reform, public health, women's freedom, sex and family relations, birth control, prostitution, yellow journalism, drug addiction, alcohol, rights of national minorities, elimination of anti-Semitism, mental hygiene, administration of justice, peace, war and patriotism.

Eastman's own commitment to cultural freedom and his distinction between means and ends collapsed under the burden of McCarthyism. Eastman, Burnham, Herberg, and Dos Passos were all convinced that liberals feared congressional investigations and tried to fabricate "hysteria" about McCarthyism because they themselves had been "implicated in the selling out of the world to totalitarian Communism." "I think," Eastman wrote to Floyd Dell, "that Communism as it developed is both worse at home and more dangerous abroad than Hitlerism was. That perhaps is the main thing that separates me from these liber-

[2]John Chamberlain, "What's Wrong With Nixon?" *National Review*, I (April 25, 1956), pp. 13–14.

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als who think that 'McCarthyism is a worse danger than Communism.'"

Eastman led a charmed life. History never caught up with him the way it did with the Old Left, and as a result the psychological terror of McCarthyism never touched him. Yet his position was as vulnerable as that of the liberals. If by democratic standards fascism and communism were equally repugnant, why did "conservatives" who advocated American intervention to save Poland from Gomulka not advocate similar measures a decade earlier to save Poland from Pilsudski? If communism "as it developed" turned out to be a "worse danger" than fascism, would not the opposite have been true had the Soviet Union been defeated in the war? (Eastman himself supported all-out aid to the Russian war effort in 1943.) If American Communist sympathizers were "implicated in selling out" Eastern Europe to Stalinist totalitarianism after World War II, did not Eastman do much the same after World War I when he hailed the triumph of Lenin in speech and in verse? Were the democratic Mensheviks, the peasant-based Social Revolutionaries, the liberal Kadets, and the Kronstadt anarchists any less the victims of Bolshevik terrorism that Eastman had once accepted as inevitable? A short memory does wonders for a clear conscience.

It was Floyd Dell who confronted Eastman with the conscience of history. "There was nothing disgraceful in having mistaken confidence in the revolutionary wisdom of Lenin," Dell wrote to Eastman in 1954, an 11-page letter that, at the urging of his wife, he decided not to send.[3] "Nor was there anything disgraceful in your becoming a too devoted partisan defender of Trotsky." But how, Dell wondered, did his old friend come to the scandalous position of supporting McCarthy, whose crimes consisted in more than what Eastman called mere "bad manners"? You boast, Dell wrote Eastman, that if called before the McCarthy Committee you would "bust the senator in the nose" as you wanted General Zwicker to do. This is sheer "fantasy," for McCarthy would probably reduce you to helplessness as he had other witnesses. It is well to imagine, Dell speculated, McCarthy discovering that Eastman, one of his supporters, had criticized him, and hence summoning Eastman to appear. No doubt you would, Dell chided Eastman, proudly tell the Committee about all the anti-Communist books you have written. And McCarthy would simply ask: "Mr. Eastman, when you wrote those books, were you under instructions from the Communist party to write them as a cover-up for subversive activities?"

Dell saw clearly the dilemma of exradicals supporting McCarthy's investigations while resisting the logic (or illogic) of McCarthyism itself. He also discerned an even greater truth—that one generation cannot rebuke the next for repeating its own mistakes. The young Whittaker Chambers and Joseph Freeman, Dell noted, were persuaded by our "eloquent articles" in the *Masses* and the *Liberator*. We provided "defenses of Stalinism in advance. The reasons we gave for loyalty to the Soviet regime were splendidly broad, Max. They gave absolution for crimes as yet uncommitted." With this knowledge haunting his mind, Dell made a plea for humility.

> I think it would be damned unreasonable of me to set the date on which I stopped making excuses for the Soviet regime as the date beyond which anyone who kept on was an infamous scoundrel. In Christian morality, too, there is the idea that the sinner who repenteth late should be forgiven no less heartily than the sinner who repenteth early.

Dell believed that Eastman's anticommunism, while intellectually prescient, had rendered him morally insensitive and politically arrogant. Dell himself would never "repent" the sentiments that earlier brought him into the revolutionary movement. "But," he added, "if there is a 'right time' for all good men to quit, all I can feel is that it *ought* to have been

[3]This letter, and Dell's 19-page critique of Eastman's manuscript, *Reflections on the Failure of Socialism*, are in the Newberry Library. The author wishes to thank the Newberry Library for permission to quote from these materials.

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'earlier'." How much earlier? Although Dell could not answer this question, he was aware that the exradical must not mistake his change of mind for the unique moment of truth.

> You are very scornful of Rolland, Barbusse, and Joe Freeman, among others, for remaining in the Soviet fold long after you had left it. You seem to think that any generous-souled person was excusable for staying in as long as you did, but those who came in or stayed in later were utterly contemptible. You are not alone in this self-righteousness; it is a trait fairly common among ex-Communists. To you it seems quite excusable to have adored Lenin, and quite inexcusable to have tolerated Stalin. But, Max, there were those who got out of the fold earlier than you did and who had found in the Soviet regime under Lenin and Trotsky *all* the hideously objectionable things that you found existent under Stalin. They could have called you, and perhaps they did, a lackey, a high priest, etc. You mention Bertrand Russell, and you give him as little credit as you can for changing his mind so quickly. The rate at which *you* changed *your* mind was the right rate. To change earlier was giddy frivolity; to change later was obsequious servility. Cromwell said to Parliament: "I beseech you, brethren, in the bowells of Christ, to conceive it possible that you may be mistaken." And I abjure you in the same spirit.

III

This issue of McCarthyism leads us to a deeper issue that divided the intellectuals of the New Right from the veteran intellectuals of the Old Left. When Buckley published his manifesto in 1959, he wrought better than he knew in choosing the title *Up From Liberalism*. Although diverse minds and personalities, Eastman, Dos Passos, Herberg, and Burnham had one thing in common—contempt for liberalism. There is, in fact, a continuity of disdain for liberalism that runs through their careers like a red thread. Whether radical or conservative, the enemy remained the same. On the Left, Eastman criticized the polite liberal reformer who could not see the "beauty" of the revolutionary deed; Dos Passos looked upon liberal intellectuals as a "milky lot" armed only with "tea-table convictions"; Herberg dismissed liberal pragmatism as the ideology of the bourgeoisie; and Burnham saw liberalism as a philosophy of hope without a philosophy of power.

When the four writers became conservatives, an ironic twist emerged in their indictment. Once they had accused liberals of being intolerant of communism, now they attacked them for being too tolerant. Formerly they had scorned the impotence of liberalism, now they complained about its power or influence. But whether weak or strong, liberalism was still held responsible for all that had gone wrong in the modern world. If in the '30s the very fragility of liberal ideology made fascism possible in Germany and Italy, in the postwar period it was, presumably, only the timidity of a powerful Western liberalism that made Stalinism possible in Eastern Europe. Previously liberalism was rejected for its inability to make a revolution, now it was repudiated for its inability to prevent one.

In domestic matters modern liberalism was also seen as a curse that has crept over the nation and produced the welfare state, the eclipse of moral authority, the decline of educational standards, and the corruption of the young. In economics, liberalism meant the death of free enterprise (Eastman); in social life, the disease of bureaucracy (Dos Passos); in philosophy and theology, the ethical relativism that poisoned authentic religion (Herberg); and in politics and diplomacy, "the ideology of Western suicide" (Burnham). At one time antiliberal radicals, the four writers became antiliberal conservatives, equally frustrated by the liberal consensus of American life.[4]

Burnham's *Suicide of the West: The Meaning and Destiny of Liberalism* best expresses, in tones of Spenglerian doom, the conservative case against the modern liberal mind. Published in 1964, the year Goldwater captured the Republican party, the book became a gospel of prophecy for the Right in America. It opens with the drama of apocalypse: the West is shrinking because it is dying. Examining an

[4]It is a measure of their intellectual honesty that these four writers on the Right remained discontent with American conservatism as well—or as Herberg put it, "with what passes for conservatism in America."

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atlas of the world as it was in 1914, and comparing it to a map of 1964, Burnham leaves no doubt in the reader's mind that half of the world was lost owing to the collapse of Europe's monarchical dynasties and the spread of communism after World War I. The contraction of the West, Burnham was convinced, had its origins in an internal malaise. America and Europe have lost "the will to survive," and this atrophy of nerve springs from liberalism, the ideology of a sick political culture.

Burnham's thesis was more clever than convincing. As his critics noted, one of the major premises of the book was the questionable equation of civilization with military and political boundaries. Burnham could argue that Western dominion had been cut to half of what it was in 1914 by tracing the recession of the lines of political sovereignty and physical force on his atlas. But while this contraction of power was taking place, Western culture was also expanding, and it was in those very Third World countries that Burnham listed (from Afghanistan to Zanzibar) that the hegemony of the West was being challenged by leaders who claimed for their own nations political rights the West once had claimed to be universal.

More questionable still was Burnham's inability to make up his mind whether he wanted to purge liberalism from the Western tradition or save the liberal West from communism. For Burnham, the crisis of modern Western culture begins with the October Revolution. The Bolsheviks "broke totally away" from the West and the new Russian empire "became not merely altogether separate from Western civilization but directly hostile to it in all these senses, in the moral, philosophical and religious as well as the material, political and social dimensions." Such a reading of history might serve to expunge Marxism from Western culture and explain the Soviet state as an outgrowth of Slavic institutions and character. But while Burnham maintained that Bolshevism repudiated the West, he also claimed that the contraction of Western civilization was the result of a series of Soviet advances, a movement that drew its ideological strength from the attitudes that liberals and Marxists held in common. "Liberalism is infected with communism in the quite precise sense that communism and liberalism share most of their basic axioms and principles, and many of their values and sentiments." Here all sense of historical understanding breaks down under the weight of causal explanation. Apparently Burnham assumed that a cause must resemble its effect, for he doubtlessly presumed that liberalism and communism were similar and that the latter somehow issued from the former—if not in origin at least in expansion.

But Burnham could not have it both ways. It was one thing to claim that Soviet diplomatic victories were caused by the illusions of fellow travelers, in which case he could indict a specific liberal mentality. It was quite another thing to claim, in order to discredit liberalism, that Marxism itself partook of the liberal tradition, in which case the Soviet Union could be seen, not as the negation of the West, but as the extension of the Enlightenment.[5] Whatever the line of reasoning, Burnham faced the same difficulty that Eastman and others encountered when they attributed the success of Communist expansion to democratic socialists and their collectivist illusions: how to explain the resistance to communism in the democratic West and the receptivity to communism in the underdeveloped world? Burnham's dilemma

[5]In "The Ex-Communist's Conscience" (reprinted in *Russia in Transition*) Isaac Deutscher drew a historical parallel between Stalinism and the anti-Soviet nations on the one hand and Napoleonic France and the Holy Alliance on the other. Reminding the exradicals of the dilemmas of their intellectual predecessors, he then maintained that Jefferson, Goethe, and Shelley saw that the "message" of the French Revolution lived on to echo powerfully throughout the 19th century, and hence they looked upon the Holy Alliance and the anti-Jacobin cause as "vicious, ridiculous anachronisms." Deutscher's categories play havoc with the historical imagination. Was Stalin a modern Napoleon trying to bring the Russian "Enlightenment" into Czechoslovakia? Or was he another Alexander I with a Slavophilic resistance to Western liberalism? While it is true that the "message" of the French Revolution did survive the personal dictatorship of Napoleon, the Soviet Union continues as a totalitarian state long after the passing of Stalin. The "message" of Marx still lies in ruins behind the Iron Curtain.

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was even greater, for when he ticked off a list of Third World countries in order to dramatize their "abandonment" by the West, he implied that the West had a legitimate right to control those countries it had once possessed and had presumably "lost." Ostensibly writing about liberalism and "civilization," Burnham was actually thinking about imperialism and power.

All this suggests that Marxists and conservatives share a peculiar understanding of liberalism, as do political "realists" and neoorthodox theologians. This misconception may explain why Burnham could not come to grips with the major antagonist of his book, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and his book *The Vital Center*. The caricature of liberalism that emerges in *Suicide of the West* reads like a parody of intellectual history. One finds, first of all, the vulgar equation of liberalism and perfectionism in order to identify both with communism.

> What communism does is to carry the liberal principles to their logical and practical extreme: the secularism, the rejection of tradition and custom; the stress on science; the confidence in the possibility of molding human beings; the determination to reform *all* established institutions; the goal of wiping out all social distinctions; the internationalism; the belief in the welfare state carried to its ultimate form in the totalitarian state.

What would Trotsky say, who railed against the New Deal and dubbed liberalism the "banality" of "common sense"? "An optimistic theory of human nature and history," Burnham continued, "is integral to, logically inseparable from, the whole body of liberal doctrine." What would Jefferson say, who regarded "man as a destroyer," a predator of his own species, "the only animal which levied war against its kind"? Intellectual history was at the mercy of politics. Drawing heavily upon Michael Oakeshott, Burnham clearly mistook the tradition of democratic radicalism, which had its origins in French utopianism, for the tradition of Anglo-American liberalism, which derived from the skepticism of Locke and Hume. The latter heritage was "a philosophy of sobriety, born in fear, nourished in disenchantment, and prone to believe that the human condition was and was likely to remain one of pain and anxiety."[6]

In the '30s, it is true, many American Soviet sympathizers were seized by a fit of absentmindedness as they wrote what David Caute has called a "postscript to the Enlightenment," abandoning Anglo-American skepticism and affirming the classical French utopian worship of reason, science, and progress.[7] But fellow-traveling liberalism represented a brief, wayward episode in modern progressivism that Schlesinger himself repudiated in *The Vital Center*. Burnham acknowledged that Schlesinger's book was thick with references to Kierkegaard, Dostoevski, Nietzsche, Proust, and other contemporary anti-Enlightenment voices. But he dismissed Schlesinger's existential liberalism as "intellectually stylish," and as for Schlesinger's Niebuhrian denials of the liberating power of knowledge and morality, Burnham exclaimed: "But the denials are like Peter's." Under Burnham's diagnosis the American liberal is doubly diseased: if he is optimistic, he is suicidal; if pessimistic, insincere.

The postwar conservative indictment of liberalism drew its spleen from the sins of the 1930s generation: the Popular Front, the Moscow trials seen as "progressive" and Stalin as "Uncle Joe," isolationism at the outbreak of World War II, silence on the Katyn Forest massacre,[8] the Wallace "peace" campaign of 1948, Alger Hiss, the censure of McCarthy. Conservatives put liberalism on trial, but could they themselves repudiate liberalism and at the same time oppose totalitarianism? When East-

[6]Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* (Boston, 1960), pp. 293–94.

[7]David Caute, *The Fellow-Travelers: A Postscript to the Enlightenment* (New York, 1973), pp. 250–66.

[8]Eastman was aware of the Katyn atrocity and of the "Gulag camp" during the war, but he was advised, by Polish authorities and by Russian émigrés like Boris Nicolaevsky, not to publicize the stories for fear of jeopardizing the Russo-American alliance. Even the *Reader's Digest*, Eastman's popular medium during the war years, succumbed to these pressures.

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man attacked Soviet Russia in *Harper's* in 1937, he made a plea for freedom based essentially on the liberal ideals of equality and justice, and he applauded John Dewey when the American liberal philosopher criticized Trotsky's Hegelian justification of proletarian dictatorship as the means of freedom. The liberal critique of Soviet communism was, then, an essential ingredient in the legacy of the Old Left, and the neoconservatives had no alternative but to resort to it during the Cold War. "If he had read Jefferson, Madison, and John Adams," Dos Passos said of Milovan Djilas in the *New Leader* in 1959, "he would definitely have something to offer." Even Burnham, the exponent of *Realpolitik,* has recently protested the Nixon administration's indifference to civil liberties in the Soviet Union when Kissinger was negotiating the détente. In the Cold War the conservative intellectual rises to the defense of the liberal values of freedom and political justice, and the *National Review* writers find themselves in the awkward position of advocating liberalism in the communist world while ridiculing it in the liberal world.

IV

We need only compare the dilemmas of the Left and the Right in America to understand why liberalism is seen as the common enemy. Both the militant radical and conservative must recognize that liberalism has not only been the dominant American ideology, it has also nurtured deeply conservative instincts based on property and individual natural rights. Thus liberalism has preempted the historical role of conservatism by bearing the values of the past, and it has thwarted the historical "mission" of radicalism by mocking all classless visions of the future. The radical, to be sure, may continue to follow Marx's advice and draw his "poetry" from the future, but for the conservative, knowledge of the American past is precisely the predicament. To be a conservative means to become aware of the historical dimension of knowledge, to nurture, revere and defend those values and institutions that belong to the past.

Here the same problem of American "exceptionalism" that confronted the Old Left in the 1930s confronted the New Right in the '50s. For the same country that failed to produce a revolutionary proletariat failed to produce a conservative intellectual aristocracy. To avoid the embarrassment, Russell Kirk may take the readers of *The Conservative Mind* abroad in order to bring home Burke and Coleridge by way of Adams and Calhoun. But his effort is no more convincing than Staughton Lynd's, who asks readers of the *Intellectual Origins of American Radicalism* to import Marx by way of Thoreau. Ironically, both the radical and the conservative suffer from the same frustrations of liberal society: one cannot make a revolution and the other cannot create a tradition. Yet the burden of the radical is lighter. When the man on the Left turns his face bravely toward the future, he assumes that the heritage of liberalism will be transcended as a necessary stage in historical development. When the intellectual on the Right turns to the American past, he finds that he is an antiliberal conservative who has nothing to conserve but the liberal tradition.

All these tensions culminate in what might be called, to use the quaint language of the Old Left, the "final contradiction," which is the *National Review* itself. Buckley's journal represents an attempt to integrate two incompatible themes in modern American intellectual history: anti-Communist conservatism, which turns out to be more Lockean than Burkean; and genuine philosophical conservatism, which is too contemplative and intellectually demanding for Buckley's public and too academic for Burnham's diplomatic causes. The latter theme—best expressed in the "New Humanism" of the 1920s—is more a sensibility than a political ideology, concerned primarily with the virtues of the good, the true, and the beautiful, with the prudence born of metaphysical skepticism, and with what Peter Berger calls the "humanism of compassion."[9] Cold War conservatism, on the

[9]For the conservative "humanist" position, see Peter Berger's "Two Paradoxes," *National Review,* XXIV (May 12, 1972), pp. 507–11.

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other hand, springs from the wounds of national humiliation, builds upon power politics and the *hubris* of total victory, tries somehow to combine federalism and private enterprise with the warfare state, and ultimately depends upon the crimes of communism and the "suicidal" illusions of liberalism.

The inspiring symbol of the philosophical conservative might be John Adams's Republic of Virtue or Henry Adams's Cathedral of Chartres; for the anti-Communist conservative it is the Berlin Wall. One image engenders faith in the dream of moral community, the other engenders fear of the reality of "permanent revolution" (Trotsky's dream became Burnham's nightmare). Philosophical conservatism suggests the American mind, anti-Communist conservatism the American will. Buckley is quite prepared, if we can believe what he has written in *The Jeweler's Eye,* to risk destruction of the Cathedral to bring down the Wall by a sheer act of will power. "Better to face the chance of being dead," wrote Buckley, "than the certainty of being Red. And if we die? We die." Buckley's comrades should have no trouble recognizing the language of inevitability, the old rhetoric of "certainty" in Communist victory. American conservatives may have more difficulty discovering what will remain to be conserved. □

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Irving Howe

Socialists & Communists in European Politics

An important discussion has begun among European Socialists. Should they enter the kinds of electoral alliances with Communists that the French and Italian Socialist parties have entered but other Socialists deplore? Have the Communists changed sufficiently so as to be regarded as appropriate allies in electoral blocs that might lead to social change through democratic means?

The European Socialist parties appear to be split along geographical lines, with the "northern" parties (England, Scandinavia, West Germany) opposed to such electoral blocs and the "southern" (Italy, France, Spain) inclined to favor them. Not accidentally, the Communist parties are feeble in the "northern" countries, strong in the "southern" ones. The best of circumstances would of course be a Communist movement so weak it need not be taken seriously, a blessing not enjoyed by French or Italian Socialists.

Echoes of this discussion are now heard in *Dissent* and, naturally, with a range of opinions. I wish to put down a few notes expressing my own views and disagreeing with those who take, I suspect, an overly optimistic view of these electoral blocs. The point is not just to come out for or against such alliances, the justification for which, if there is one, depends largely on local circumstances; the point is to stress that even if we reluctantly conclude that such alliances may be necessary in some countries there must still be great caution and, above all, a deep-going intellectual offensive against every shade of authoritarian thought, whether "Marxist-Leninist," Stalinist, Brezhnevite, Maoist, Castroite, or whatever.

THERE *have* been important changes in the West European Communist parties. Various *Dissent* contributors have already noted some signs of these: the efforts of the Italian and Spanish parties to achieve a measure of autonomy vis à vis Moscow; their statements favoring multiparty regimes; their readiness to enter blocs not only with Socialists but with moderate bourgeois parties; their criticisms of the Russian intervention in Czechoslovakia and of Russian persecution of dissident writers; the public statements by Italian CP leaders attacking the Portuguese CP for its neo-Stalinist course; the evident preference the CP leaders of Spain show in public for Soares, the Portuguese Socialist, over Cunhal, the Portuguese Communist. This July Berlinguer, the Italian CP leader, and Carillo, the Spanish CP leader, issued a declaration that "their conception of the democratic advance toward socialism in peace and freedom is not a tactical attitude but a strategic conviction." And in an interview with C. L. Sulzberger of the *New York Times*, Carillo has said: "Democracy represents a large popular advance; it is not just bourgeois; it should be developed in every sense."

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These signs of ideological change and confusion, perhaps because they are finally so important, are the most difficult to evaluate. One would prefer that democracy be elevated not just from a tactic to a strategy but from a strategy to a principle, a moral imperative. One would feel easier if Carillo, while praising democracy, did not also continue to defend the Stalinist suppression of anarchists and Trotskyists during the Spanish Civil War (in a recent book, *Demain l'Espagne: entretiens avec Régis Debray et Max Gallo*). And one would certainly take more seriously the democratic protestations of such French CP leaders as Georges Marchais if they did not point to East European countries as examples of what they mean by a multiparty regime.

Nevertheless, something is happening and, so far as one can tell, something that comes to more than, though it may also include, a tactical maneuver.

Further testimony is provided by Neil McInnes's *The Communist Parties of Western Europe* (Oxford University Press, 1975), a work scholarly in character and without polemical intent. McInnes has accumulated rich detail about the structure and functioning of the West European Communist parties to show that they are moving away from, if they have not yet wholly abandoned, the model of the Bolshevik "vanguard" party. We learn that in the major European countries no more than one out of every two or three CP members takes the party paper; that the turnover in CP membership is enormous (66 percent in France between 1969 and 1972); that in the mass Communist parties many members attend branch meetings no more than once or twice a year; that when ideological crises occur, as that after the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, party members are more inclined to doubt and disaffection than nonparty Communist voters. (The members care more about ideology than the voters, while the voters care more about immediate socioeconomic issues than the members—not true in all instances, but true enough to be a significant factor.)

That the Communist parties of France and Italy no longer conform to the Bolshevik model of the party is, of course, hardly news. In practice if not profession, these parties moved away from that model as early as the years directly after World War II (some would say, even earlier). No mass party, such as the CPs of France and Italy have become, can long remain faithful to the Bolshevik model, especially if functioning for any length of time in a parliamentary system that is stable and popular. In fact, the changes in organizational structure had begun to occur in the French CP when it was still quite Stalinist—changes enforced simply by the requirements of maintaining a party with hundreds of thousands of members. And the fact that a party may be "loose" in structure (though the "looseness" of a Communist party is different in kind from that of other parties) is not yet sufficient reason for supposing that it has genuinely accepted the terms of parliamentary democracy. It may just be enough for concluding that, for the time at least, it cannot act with much effectiveness beyond the bounds of parliamentary democracy.

McInnes shows that the CP of France or Italy is no longer a *revolutionary* party in the traditional Leninist sense, or even in its Stalinist caricature; but, as he notes, this is not ground for saying that it is no longer an *authoritarian* party with strong antidemocratic biases and characteristics.

Still less is it a reason for calling the West European CPs "left social democratic," as some writers have. A "left social democratic"

Monologue & Mausoleum

Whatever the limitations of Western democracy (which are many and grave), there can be no political life without freedom of criticism. . . . The young fanatics who recite the catechism of Mao–by the way, a mediocre academic poet–commit not only an esthetic and intellectual error but also a moral one. Critical thinking cannot be sacrificed on the altars of accelerated development, the revolutionary idea, the leader's prestige and infallibility, or any other mirage. . . . Every dictatorship, whether of man or of party, leads to the two forms that schizophrenia loves most: the monologue and the mausoleum.

OCTAVIO PAZ □

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party is one that favors more stringent socio-economic changes than most social democrats favor; but it still proposes to function within the limits of parliamentary democracy. Otherwise, the label of "left social democratic" is counterfeit. And a "left social democratic" party neither continues to support the Russian dictatorship, as the CPs do, nor functions by the authoritarian procedures that Communists call "democratic centralism."

What, then, are we to make of the democratic avowals of certain West European Communist parties, their statements favoring multiparty regimes, parliamentarism, freedom of speech, etc.? The sensible conclusion is that these avowals have no single or precise meaning; they are neither mere deceptions nor changes of heart undertaken in good faith. Just as it is impossible right now to find a proper label for the Italian or Spanish CP(neither merely totalitarian nor democratic), so must one see these parties as in process of change and confusion. At least some of the following factors should be noted:

• In countries like Italy the CP bureaucracy has become enormous. It holds major offices in large cities and provinces; it has developed its own social and economic interests; it cares more about the substance of power than the vision of revolt. Such a vision probably makes CP officials nervous—you can't easily imagine the Communist mayor of Bologna rushing off to the woods for some rifle practice in a revolutionary militia. The CP political machine follows, though only in part, the modes and rhythms of all political machines. It favors stability in the areas it controls, it works out deals with other parties, it finds office very comfortable. And it discovers appetites for larger shares of power—national power. To gain that, it must maneuver within the parliamentary system, since it has neither the wish nor capacity for revolutionary coups, nor the ability to gain a majority of the Italian vote and rule on its own. It is also aware that even a legal ascent to power raises major dangers of civil dissension, perhaps civil war. Hence, the policy of electoral blocs, which necessarily leads to the practice and language of parliamentarism. How "sincere" is the Italian CP in all this? Lenin said that no one had ever invented a "sincerometer," and about that, at least, he was right.

• For some veteran party leaders and no doubt a layer of aging party members, the democratic professions are seen mainly as a dialectical deceit to prepare for the final acquisition of power and party hegemony. Among working-class militants in the French or Italian CP, there are many who hold sincerely both to the myth of the October Revolution and the party's parliamentary course today. You can reconcile these by mumbling something about "different circumstances," or you can let them rub against one another in your mind without trying to reconcile them.

• And there are surely people in the Italian and Spanish parties, also perhaps in the French, who are struggling and stumbling toward new ideas. In practice they leave behind them increasing portions of their "Marxism-Leninism," yet they remain uncertain about "bourgeois democracy." Above all, they are reluctant, they are *afraid* to surrender that most powerful form of secular faith in our century: the ideology of "Marxism-Leninism." The practice goes, the ideology remains. But for how long?

LET US now glance at some of the reasons for deep skepticism regarding the "new face" of the West European Communist parties.

• The CPs remain, with whatever modulations or embarrassment, committed to precisely the ideology of "Marxism-Leninism" that the more sensitive elements within them find increasingly dubious. That this ideology may be more and more vestigial, that it is not tied to revolutionary practice (or, as some American friends say, *praxis*), may well be true; but it is also a major barrier to democratic politics. People of the anti-Stalinist Left, myself among them, have often underestimated the extent to which the Communist leaderships and militants take seriously their ideological claims. Active participation in the Communist movement entails quasi-religious, quasi-fanati-

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cal structures of belief, sometimes rabid, sometimes mild, but almost always present. To abandon this ideology would be to forego the strongest argument for maintaining a separate Communist organization. And at a time when the CP *appears* to be becoming less and less different in its day-to-day politics from most Socialist parties, the CP leaders have an acute need for arguments justifying their "vanguard," with all the powers and privileges it yields them. Hence they will cling, if not to the substance, then to the slogans, language, and myths of "Marxism-Leninism."

(McInnes remarks: "Even when western CPs concede that East European society has certain inadequacies, that 'mistakes' have been made there, and that upon occasion legality has been infringed there, they will not specify the oppression of political opposition and the intolerance of criticism among those 'shortcomings.'")

- The Communist parties retain a strongly authoritarian structure, not quite as rigid as it used to be but still refusing to accept open factional groups and disputes within its ranks. (Such groups and disputes are an absolute prerequisite for a democratic party.) The extent to which the French or Italian CP still adheres to the amorphous doctrine of "democratic centralism" is a fine point of dispute for scholastics; what matters is that the CPs, even the "best" of them, remain far from the democratic ethos that, even with bureaucratic flaws, prevails in the Socialist parties of Europe.

- Within the CPs there survive pockets of "true believers," old Stalinists and younger neo-Stalinists, some in the top leadership, others among functionaries and workers, who cling to an esoteric doctrine of "revolution" and "the dictatorship of the proletariat." In quiet times, these people may suppress their deeper persuasions. But in moments of crisis, they could become a serious force pressing for an authoritarian "solution": they could spring forth as the "true Communists" within the party, the fierce thin man within the flabby fat one. Students of the French CP report that the proletarian veterans tend to be most inclined to approve Soviet repressions in the name of "socialist discipline." And even if we agree to regard the Portuguese party as an exception in the ranks of the West European Communists, there are surely significant numbers of "Portuguese" within the other CPs, old hacks and devoted militants who in the proper circumstances could suddenly become "Portuguese."

- Ties with the Soviet Union remain crucial. There have been serious disputes between the Russians and the Italian and Spanish parties, but they remain "comrades," they come together at conferences, they maintain relations, they share a common language, ideology, tradition, cause. Even for the most heterodox of CPs, the myth of the Soviet Union remains a crucial defining factor, one of the major supports of its claims to historical distinctiveness and necessity. And beyond the Soviet Union looms the still greater myth of the Bolshevik Revolution. I am inclined to think that finally the myth of the October Revolution remains the single most powerful force in keeping alive a Communist "culture." So long as this myth does remain powerful within Communist ranks, the protestations of the CP to democracy must be suspect.

What is happening today in the West European Communist parties is a complicated mixture of opportunist tactic and ideological crisis. The biggest danger one can foresee is not a revolutionary coup but a situation something like this: a Communist-Socialist bloc wins an election by a narrow margin, it enacts portions of its joint program, sections of the middle class grow fearful, a crisis verging on civil war follows, and in the ensuing social chaos the hard-line Communists, grown stronger within the party and entrenched in government offices, try to grab power.

There are other troubling scenarios. Even in the uneasy balance of power that today prevails in Europe, a major growth of Communist influence in Italy, Spain, or France could lead to enormous crisis, perhaps confrontation. Indeed, anything that reinforces the myth that the

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Communists represent a "wave of the future," is against the interests of democracy and socialism.

It may be, however, that to refuse point-blank to enter into electoral alliances with the Communists in such countries as France and Italy is a form of political sterility. For the inner changes and crises within the Communist parties ought to be regarded as a major opportunity for breaking the hold these parties have on the French and Italian working classes. An electoral alliance poses not merely tactical advantages for the Communists but strategic dangers, and one reason the French CP has lately become so truculent with regard to the Socialists is that it foresees the possibility, shown to be acute in the recent elections, that it will be replaced by them as the leading party of the French Left.

What seems to me the crucial factor in judging the advisability of electoral alliances is the condition of the socialist movement in a given country. Will it be aggressive and lucid in espousing democratic values? Will it persist, electoral bloc or not, in basic criticisms of authoritarianism? Will it see beyond short-range advantages and try to recreate a new community of the democratic Left, one that will draw both younger, independent people and the better elements of the CP? Will it speak with the courage and forthrightness of Mario Soares and his friends in Portugal who have developed a sustained, principled criticism of left-authoritarianism?

Obviously, this is more likely to happen in some countries than in others. I cannot say that, from where I sit, the European Socialist movement as a whole has the intellectual force and self-confidence that would be required for such a difficult policy. And the irony of it all is that those European Socialist parties best in a position to effect such a policy tend to be those that least need consider electoral alliances with the Communists.

These are some of the problems our European friends face today: problems that entail grave dangers but could yield enormous opportunities. □

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Henry Pachter

Who are the Palestinians?

For several issues now, Dissent *has been printing material on the Middle East situation, among other articles, the dialogue between Amos Oz and Irving Howe in our Spring 1975 issue, Bernard Avishai's "Zionism: Was It Really Colonialist?" in the same issue, and N. Gordon Levin's critique of Noam Chomsky in the Summer 1975 issue. Below we continue the discussion with another contribution.* – EDS.

Who are they, and who has the right to speak for them?

Oppressed nationalities find it difficult to get a hearing because those who pretend to represent them often are political adventurers who merely exploit them—be it for imperialistic purposes of other powers or to vent on imaginary enemies their own hate of the world. This is true of the Somalis, the Irish, the Bengali, the Ibos; it is doubly true of the Palestinians because their country happens to lie at the crossroads of a world power struggle. Nowhere else do local enmities serve so many outside masters; nowhere else do foreign interests spread so much confusion about the very identity of the people whom they pretend to save.

So, first of all let us agree: like most Irish, most Palestinians are not terrorists; but like many Ulstermen or Basques, many Palestinians will condone or even applaud acts of terrorism as long as they lack other means to express what they consider their just grievances, and as long as those grievances continue to be seen as just by others. Let us also agree that their plight is not of their own making; they have been objects of other peoples' policies for 3,000 years.

Palestine, the land of the Philistines, a Semitic people that once was subjugated by Joshua and by David, has retained that name through the centuries as it was conquered by Hittites, Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs,[1] Christians from the West, Osmanli Turks, the British. Till recently in modern times it was sparsely settled, mostly by Arab Bedouins, and considered part of Syria. A movement to liberate and unite the Arabs (then under Turkish domination) existed long before the First World War. Then the British used Arab tribesmen to wrest Palestine, Mesopotamia [Iraq], and Syria from the Turks, promising them "sovereignty" and self-determination. After prolonged uprisings those parts of Syria that lay east of the Jordan River were given to Hashemite sheiks, who thereafter were called kings; the part west of the Jordan River was styled the British Mandate of Palestine, supposed to evolve toward self-government; Northern Syria became a French Mandate. The terms of the Mandates were illegal even by the standards of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which was their covering law. Previously, a unilateral declaration by Foreign Minister Arthur Balfour had designated "Palestine" as a "Jewish homeland";

[1] Arabs today identify themselves only by speech. Originally the term meant conquerors coming from the Peninsula.

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but, simultaneously, Weizmann and Lord Harlech assured the Arabs that this should not interfere with Arab aspirations to sovereignty.

What these terms meant or how to reconcile them was never spelled out except in Balfour's memoirs, where he wondered how anybody could have been misled into thinking that they meant anything.[2] But on the evidence of contemporary customs and conditions, the Balfour Declaration was consistent with an immigration rate of 50,000 a year and a ratio of two to one between Moslems and Jews. In 1930, after serious Arab riots, the immigration rate was severely restricted—just when Jews were desperate, not for a homeland but for a place of asylum. At the outbreak of World War II, the population consisted of 456,000 Jews and 1.1 million Moslems; at its end, the census counted 1.143 million Moslems, 583,000 Jews, and 145,000 Christians.

The Holocaust and the war left the Allies a "disposal problem" in Western Europe: nearly 100,000 East European Jews who had been made homeless by persecution and political changes were languishing in displaced-persons camps, fed by charitable contributions and government aid, mostly from the United States (which, however, did not lift its restrictions on immigrants from Eastern Europe). Responding to strong pressures from the Zionist organizations (and minding the electoral situation at home), President Truman resolved the problem by agreeing to the foundation of a Jewish state in Palestine. Soviet diplomacy gladly gave its assent, viewing any diminution of the British Empire as so much gain for itself and hoping to ingratiate itself with both Jews and Arabs.

Originally the British wanted to build a base in Haifa because—oh irony!—they were about to fulfill another Arab demand: to evacuate the base in Alexandria. On the other hand, a White Paper of 1939 also had promised independence to Palestine, but weary of Arab terrorism and immediately prompted by Jewish terrorism, the Labour government decided to abandon the thankless task of policing the peace between Jews and Arabs.[3] The deal was consummated by a U.N. Security Council resolution,[4] the only instrument of international law on which the State of Israel can base its existence. It is therefore necessary to remember that the United Nations at that time created not one state but two on the west side of the Jordan: one Jewish and one Arab. The Jewish state so created was totally unviable: it consisted of three noncontiguous parts encompassing most Jewish settlements and a like number of Arabs. Even Ben Gurion, however, accepted this rump territory because at that time he still assumed that Palestine would remain an economic unit where two peoples would be able to develop in symbiosis—a binational state in all but name.

A word about this assumed symbiosis. Not only Jews but Arabs too had come into Palestine, attracted by the higher wages and better working conditions under Jewish employers, or simply by the promise of prosperity that the Jewish immigration and its foreign backers brought to the country. The Jewish labor organization, Histadruth, had seen with alarm how fellow Jews were hiring Arab labor at low wages while Jewish immigrants were jobless. From the early 1920s on, therefore, it had launched a campaign "to fight for places to work."[5] Its strongly nationalistic appeal brought quick success to this campaign, so that by the 1930s Arabs worked for Jews mostly in menial positions that Jewish workers would

[2]In 1922, Colonial Secretary Churchill rejected the interpretation that Arab laws and customs had to be subordinated to Jewish interests, and Arab representatives rejected every constitution the British or the League of Nations tried to impose on the country. The Arab Congress in 1928 demanded a "fully democratic" government—whatever that meant in terms of Arab constitutions.

[3]Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin was no "anti-Semite"; he simply dropped a hot potato that cost England £50 million a year. He was not the only Englishman, however, who wondered why the Jews were turning against England, of all nations, which had fought Hitler. Gratitude is not a political word, but bitterness is!

[4]The U.N. then had 57 members; obviously the resolution would not pass today. Except for states recognized in the Westphalian Peace treaty (1648) and at the Vienna Congress (1815) no other state has received such sanction. States usually are the product of violence.

[5]This was the term used abroad; the Hebrew term sounds less offensive.

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not accept. Nevertheless, a sufficient number of Arabs in Palestine prospered, learned mechanical skills, and went to college, so that former Palestinians now occupy enviable positions in all Arab countries as executives, opinion leaders, professional men, foremen, and skilled workers.

There is no doubt that the social-economic upset that emanated from Jewish Palestine was one of the reasons for Arab sheiks, kings, and capitalists to fear the establishment of a Jewish state. Another was the threat of Jewish mass immigration and the growth of a new power center that was bound to subvert the *status quo* in the Middle East. At that time, only 20 years after the Balfour Declaration, Zionism was still considered a tool of British imperialism, and the Mufti of Jerusalem broadcast for Hitler from Berlin during World War II. To him, as to many Arabs and blacks today, Zionism is the imperialists' base in the Middle East.

A lot of silly arguments have been heard about this catchword; does it apply to Zionism? It is true that Order Wingate trained the Haganah (Jewish underground defense organization); but another British officer, Glubb Pasha, led the army of Transjordan. And 80 years before these events, Lord Palmerston had sponsored the unification of Italy; will anybody therefore charge that Garibaldi was a tool of British imperialism? The Jewish state was the aim of a *national* conquest; its conflict with Arab states or Arab interests is on the order of *national* rivalries, and this remains true even if Jews or Arabs or both are allied with imperial powers. At some time the British favored the Jews; but since 1930 they found Zionist presumptions increasingly embarrassing. Zionism exploited British power and then turned against it. The British, in turn, contrary to Lenin's theory of imperialism, did not mean to "exploit" Palestine economically but as the Mandate power forbade the development of Jewish industries.

America has invested heavily in Arab oil developments. But the charge that it uses Israel to keep the sheiks docile is totally unfounded and, on the face of it, silly. The policy of the oil companies and of the State Department has been consistently pro-Arab unless one defines as pro-Israel any policy not aiming at the destruction of the Jewish state. The responsibility for its preservation, as of some other elements of the *status quo* the U.S. is committed to defend, has been a heavy burden. But it is in the nature of empires to be drawn into national border conflicts where their clients have interests, and very often they would rather not have to support them. Far from being used by the Russians or the Americans for their purposes, both Jews and Arabs have deliberately involved their big brothers in their own defense policies.

Much has been made of the Histadruth's job policy. Obviously, in terms of Lenin's theory of imperialism, Jewish business has not been guilty of exploiting cheap Arab labor; rather, Jewish colonists have been guilty of making Arabs jobless and driving them from their lands. I have to explain here a subtlety of feudal law: fellahim can be sold along with the land on which they have been sitting; but the land cannot be sold without them, pulling it away from under them. When the Jewish Agency, aware only of capitalist law, bought land from the callous effendis, it may honestly have thought that thereby it had acquired the right to expel the fellahim. (This repeats the story of the "enclosures," well known to readers of Marx's *Capital*.) As the Phoenicians had done at Carthage and the Athenians in Sicily, the Jews acquired land and Jewish colons "settled" it. This is the original meaning of "colonization."[6] Notwithstanding Lenin, it may be called an imperialist policy on the part of the nation that hopes to prevail in such a fight for the land. Jewish settlers, who had naively begun to cultivate this ground (including kibbutzniks who did so in the name of "socialism"), wondered why the former owners or tenants of those grounds were firing at them from afar or staging surprise attacks on

[6] A reader points out that the number affected was comparatively small and terrorism was bred mostly in the cities. Unfortunately, the symbolic and political value of the object does not depend on its size or price.

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their innocent children: from the vantage of the expelled Palestinians, the settlers were usurpers, colonizers, imperialists in person, not the tools of mysterious powers across the sea.[7]

This is the background of the war of 1948, which resulted in Israel's conquest of a contiguous territory (the boundaries of 1948–67), also in the Hashemite annexation of territory west of the Jordan River including part of Jerusalem and such Biblical cities as Bethlehem and Nablus, and finally—and most important for the present purpose—the flight of 600,000 Arabs from their native home.[8] In the light of the communal strife that had preceded the British pullout, that flight is totally understandable. A sensible person avoids being in anybody's firing line, especially in this kind of civil war. The Jewish defense organizations had taken care to project an image of fierceness. Some, like Menahem Begin's Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern gang, were outright terrorists; their tactics appalled even Ben Gurion.[9] In June 1945 the Irgun blew up the King David Hotel, causing 91 deaths. British soldiers were surreptitiously shot; cars loaded with dynamite were driven into British army camps. Do these people have a right to complain about terrorism? Even the Palmach, the combat organization of the Haganah, blew up bridges, derailed trains, etc. The crimes that had been committed in a few (fortunately very few) places had frightened the Arabs; when war came to their area, they followed the advice to stay clear of it. In so doing, they indicated that they were not taking part in the war operations. Clearly, in all wars of the past, displaced populations did expect to go back to their original places of residence, of work, of personal contacts. To keep them from returning, to forbid them to choose between staying abroad and accepting conquest, violates custom and international law—in fact it is a crime. Yet, for reasons of national policy, the Israeli government seized this opportunity to create a demographically homogeneous Jewish state.[10]

It was at this moment, and through this deed, that the issue of the "Palestinians" was created. So far, we have encountered Palestinians as the inhabitants of an area that might include all of the present state of Jordan, or only the population of the Mandate territory. Now the name was to mean almost exclusively the million Arabs who claimed that they had been expelled from their homeland and were now forced to live in primitive camps spread outside Israel in the Gaza strip, on the West Bank, in Lebanon, and in Syria. These camps were maintained by UNRRA, a United Nations affiliate, and financed mostly by American contributions.

Aside from the moral and humanitarian outrage they constitute, maintaining these camps was a political mistake of the first order. They became seedbeds of unrest, recruiting grounds for terrorist organizations, breeding places for corruption, blackmail, and crime. A few cents a day per head—amounting to many million

[7]"The revolt is largely manned by the peasantry, that is to say by the people whose life and livelihood are on the soil but who have no say whatever in its disposal; and their anger and violence are as much directed against the Arab landowners and brokers who have facilitated the sales as against the policy of the mandatory Power under whose aegis the transactions have taken place. The fact that some of those landowners have served on national Arab bodies makes them only more odious to the insurgent peasantry and has rendered it less amenable to the influence of the political leaders as a whole." George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1965; Foreword, October 1938) pp. 406–407. The Jewish leaders—except for the Communists, Martin Buber, and some Chalutzim—never thought of allying themselves with these victims of colonization. (See Avishai in *Dissent*, Spring 1975.)

[8]Some say the number was 800,000—more than had been living in the Jewish half of Palestine.

[9]Obviously, what applies to Arabs must apply to Jews. Most Jews may not have approved of terrorism (though my father, usually one of the most law-abiding citizens, did); but Arabs are even less able than Jews to distinguish between factions in the other camp. Do I have to argue that it is possible to condemn both the crime and its attribution to a whole people? But I am not arguing here about the morality of terror; my aim is to establish the fact that the Arab population *felt* threatened..

[10]Unfortunately, socialists like *Dissent* contributors Bernard Ashkvai and N. Gordon Levin, have defended this theft on the ground that "socialist values" can be realized better in a securely Jewish environment. Would they agree with the Soviet government that "Soviet values" can be realized better in an environment that does not include Solzhenitsyn, Pasternak, Trotsky?

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dollars a year: that meant an invitation to count many heads twice. The fraudulent claim that there are 2 million people in those camps is clearly exposed by the census figures of 1946. Even if every single Arab of all Palestine fled, there could not be more than 1.2 million. But of course, in the 30 years that have elapsed, the original 600,000 have been blessed with children and grandchildren; even some "dead souls" may have been procreative. Moreover, no one denies that many Arabs on the West Bank considered the miserable allowance in the camps preferable to their normal subsistence under Arab governments. On the other hand, genuine refugees from Palestine left the camps—either through death or because they found lucrative employment in other Arab states. They are still statistics in the camp population, and so are their children, although they may live in other countries. By the most conservative statistics, therefore, more than half of the present camp inmates had never been in Israel. But the Israelis who justify their claim to the land by their tribal memory of 2,000 years obviously have no argument against people whose claim is based on tribal memories reaching back only 30 years. More than the expellees' actual misery, the bitterness of the sacrifice that was imposed on them intensifies the hate that defines the Palestinians as a nation distinct from other Arabs.

Should the displaced Palestinians have been received by other Arab states? The Germans expelled from Eastern Europe after World War II have been among the Federal Republic's biggest assets. England has admitted West Indians and mestizos whose country had become someone's state. Why do not Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, or rich Kuweit, Algeria, Saudi Arabia help the Palestinian brothers for whom they shed such abundant tears? Though the oil sheiks have the means, they feel no obligation to do so.[11] Actually, they would rather use these unfortunate victims of national wars as pawns in their own game of power politics. They are not interested in healing this wound; they want it to fester—but in the body of Israel, and in the body of world peace.

How can this be prevented? At some point between 1948 and 1968, the United States should have stopped subsidizing the refugee camps and Israel should have made an offer that might have, in one bold stroke, drastically reduced the number of "Palestinians" and disarmed their militancy. The offer should have been based on recognition of legitimate claims by those who could prove that they had lost their property, residence, or job in the present territory of Israel. They should have been given the option of either a settlement in money or return under Israeli law. Since the conditions of life as a second-class citizen are not enviable even if the nationalities were not emotionally hostile to each other, I believe that few Palestinians would have opted for return. Most would rather have taken the money, especially if at the same time U.S. subsidies were to be ended.[12]

The Jewish authorities and public opinion have rejected such proposals on the twofold ground that Israel could not accommodate so many Arabs without disrupting her economy and without endangering the safety of her state.[13] The first part of this rejoinder sounds odd in view of their steady clamor for more immigrants from countries holding more Jews than there are Arab statistics in the camps; the second part is refuted by the results of the Six-Day War, which has added another million Arabs to the population of Israel, and many Israelis even speak of a "Greater Isael." (I think most Israelis would keep the occupied areas if they could move the Arabs out, while Arab honor, strangely, demands the return of

[11]Israel claims that she received a million Oriental Jews, mostly expelled from Arab countries. But the rationale of the Jewish "homeland" conflicts with the suggestion that these should be balanced against the Arab expellees. They would have the right to Israeli citizenship even without being harassed in Bagdad. Besides, a forcible population exchange is repugnant.

[12]Gordon Levin, already quoted, rejects the notion that readmission could "serve [any] real human interests besides a satisfaction of Arab honor." Indeed, that is a quest of deep concern, and it is in Israel's power to restore that sense of honor.

[13]It seems that Zionism has abandoned its earliest propaganda line saying that a Jewish state would make its Arab citizens happy and contented.

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uninhabited desert first and liberation of the bemoaned brothers later.)

Now, when we talk of Palestinians we mean both the refugees in the camps of 1948 and the million Arabs who live under military authorities in conquered territory. Despite the prosperity that annexation has brought to them, they are a source of unrest and acute danger to peace. There can be no settlement, no truce and no confidence between Arabs and Jews as long as their status is not determined equitably and as long as there is no international machinery to ascertain the will of the Palestinians themselves. Unless a political dialogue is initiated between Israel and responsible Arab leaders—a dialogue about concrete proposals that will satisfy legitimate claims—Mr. Arafat will step into the vacuum and pretend that he knows what the Palestinians want, and he will go on blackmailing his Arab friends and the international community. He also has rivals: should he not occupy the vacuum, some terrorist group or the Communist party will. The ball therefore is in Israel's court. It may not be easy, but unless Mr. Rabin finds a partner to hold a dialogue with, he may face another war.[14]

At the time of the Six-day War, the Israeli government declared that it would hold the occupied territories only as pawns and evacuate them in return for a peace treaty. It has offered to pay compensation to those who have lost property in old Palestine (or rather, to allow the United States to make such payments), but it has not given refugees a choice of taking payment or returning. Prompted by Kissinger, it is now making diplomatic gestures—ever so reluctantly—which might have been helpful five years ago but will not now divide Israel's enemies. Meanwhile, the cancer of the Palestinians continues not only to fester but is being transferred to the world arena, where it will eat away the possibilities of peaceful coexistence. A decision is urgently needed to attack the root of the evil. Neither recriminations about the past nor legal constructions of right and wrong are required but political answers to political problems.

The offer to receive or to compensate legitimate claimants might be made with greater confidence by the Israeli government if at the same time the Palestinians were to be offered a state of their own. It has been suggested that the West Bank and the Gaza strip—two noncontinguous territories—would constitute such a state. I don't believe that it would be economically viable; hence it would be a pawn in the political game of the oil sheiks. Nor would it be politically acceptable without the Arab part of Jerusalem. I know that the Israelis are loath to give up any part of Jerusalem, and I do not know of any device of condominium or international regime that would make the administration of the city possible without friction; I am also aware that the real point of the quarrel is not viability but sovereignty. Both these peoples are too primitive in their tribal instincts or too immature as nations to be reasonable on such questions where self-respect is at stake. Therefore, the solution for Jerusalem will have to be imposed by the big powers; it cannot be negotiated between the parties concerned. As long as they pretend to negotiate about it, they merely indicate that they do not mean to make peace.

By contrast, the return of the occupied territories must be negotiated by Israel herself with her neighbors, and the return of the refugees can be negotiated only privately between the Israeli government and those private parties who claim to be residents of the area now under that government's jurisdiction. By the nature of the problem, this cannot be a problem between Israel and Egypt or Syria, for neither of these countries claims sovereignty in Palestine. It could be negotiated between Israel and a state that can speak in the name of the Palestinians. These are a distinct people, dif-

[14] Arab notables in the occupied areas are subject to intimidation; some Israelis think that therefore Arafat is the only *available* partner. It is certain that no parley is now conceivable without him—a calamity that conforms to the pattern of the Israelis' poor grasp of diplomatic realities: they have always been forced to choose between two evils after they had rejected an alternative that was, after all, second best.

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ferent in background and culture from the Bedouins of Jordan, from the mercantile Lebanese, from the temperamental Syrians and the millenia-old Egyptians. They must determine their own fate, both in Israel and in the West Bank area. They would probably prefer to sever their political ties with Jordan and might be interested in economic arrangements, to mutual advantage, with Israel. It stands to reason that they would rather not fight Boumédienne's wars and that the skimpy subsidies some of their guerrillas are getting from oil sheiks cannot be substitutes for a development plan and a technology to go with it. In the long run, a Palestinian state of the West Bank might easily fall into Israel's orbit, or become a client of Moscow, Peking, Washington, Teheran—who knows?

In the beginning, a Palestinian state would probably make obstreperous noises at international gatherings, nor might it in other ways be the most desirable neighbor one would wish to have. Nevertheless, I believe that the nonsatisfied demand for a Palestinian state is now a major source of posturing, gesturing, and confrontation. If Israel and Jews in the West would examine their interests rather than their emotional fears and historical memories, they might decide that an approach to the Palestinians offers more chances for a lasting peace than the speculations about Sadat's sincerity. Anyway, even supposing that he seeks a settlement with Israel for whatever reasons, Sadat cannot deliver the Palestinians, and most likely no outside power can do that; they can be appeased only by a dramatic reversal in Israeli policy. (I have used the discredited term deliberately because no other applies; I propose a "solution" that will not last.)

In suggesting such appeasement, I do not think that it can bring an early cessation of terrorist attacks or a lowering of the level of invective in Arab rhetoric. But it may lay the foundation of a more constructive relationship between Arabs and Jews on the local level and perhaps bring to old Palestine some kind of unity on the basis of economic interests and businesslike relations. In other words: I propose to depoliticize and deideologize the problem. Knowing that in this age everybody is "raising consciousness" or seeking to establish an identity, I charge that there is altogether too much of that in the Middle East. The Palestinians speak Arabic and worship in mosques; but they have come from many countries and have intermarried with many conquering nations. Their identity is of rather recent origin, through the misfortunes of wars and yet another foreign conquest. Their appeasement ought to be less difficult than their arousal. They are looking for opportunities—I am even tempted to say that they can be bought; but they also can be terrorized (this may be the greatest obstacle to peace at the moment).

Mr. Arafat will speak for the Palestinians as long as they are not allowed to speak for themselves. But it strikes me that his terrorism has so far not made him a hero to his people. He has imposed himself on the oil sheiks, but he is not widely admired and acclaimed. Arafat's threats, much like his predecessor Shukairi's, sound more like blackmail than like fanaticism. He has his little hours of triumph when the Third World forces in international bodies need once more to show their "identity" by voting against the United States on an issue that is guaranteed to be without consequence. The Palestinians are neither better off nor worse if Arafat "represents" them in the ILO. No one has yet filled his belly by following the Jihad, though

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admittedly some heads might get filled with drunkenness.

Can Israel wager her security on the vague prospect that one day the Palestinians might not only awaken but also mature? There are no alternatives, and one must look for solutions that promise to last. One may hope to prevent an explosion though one may not have removed the dynamite. But above all, one must divide, not unite, one's enemies.

Third World strategists have made the Palestinians' issue into a cutting edge of their attack on Western positions in world politics. To blunt that edge we don't have to take drastic measures but we need a radical rethinking of the issue. The friends of Israel (and surprisingly, that includes those who have valiantly criticized "cold war attitudes" in U.S. policies) are tied down in the confrontation patterns of the past decades; they think in terms of security instead of in political terms. They have missed valuable opportunities for peace in the last 10 years. They gamble on the survival chances of a particular structure of the Israeli state—which is a dangerous gamble at best and is becoming more dangerous every day. The thought of having Arab citizens in their midst horrifies them; but while staring at that danger they don't see the gathering of Arab armies outside the gate. They have too much confidence that the gate can be held closed for all time; this is an illusion for which others have paid dearly. In the long run security lies only in the confidence of one's neighbors.

Aware that I have made some controversial statements, I want to make clear that the issue is neither moral nor judicial, but political. Those who wish to debate my proposal should refrain from reminding me who "started it" or who is "more to blame" or whose rights are better. Wherever I have touched upon such questions, my intention has merely been to show how Palestinians *see* them, and *that* is a political *fact*, not a moral judgment. □

The fate of intellectuals and artists persecuted for their convictions, political opinions or social commitment cannot be ignored by the world public, both from an ethical point of view and as a matter of professional solidarity.
Prof. Frantisek Janouch

Don't make it easier for them to turn us into Orwellian non-persons. Do not forget us. Invite us to conferences, ask us to give lectures . . . turn to us for reviews and other contributions to journals, books, questionnaires on various problems. Make it possible for us to publish our work.
Anon from **Seven Letters from Prague**

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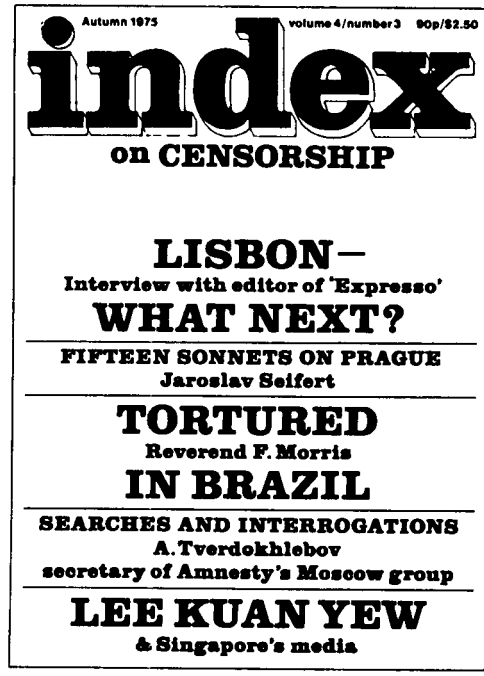

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David Bromwich

Documentary in Search of a War

Images of war carry a force the facts alone hardly ever sponsor. When American soldiers went to Vietnam, they also stayed at home, on television, in battle reports that droned for a precise interval and then ceased for 24 hours, and these few feet of action-news, as it is now called, clipped and framed and grimly packaged, helped to form and indeed *were* for most Americans the experience of the Vietnamese war. The effect was curiously abstract. Its technical adeptness had perhaps something in common with American management of the war itself. Yet there are images of a different kind that operate more severely on their witnesses. I remember, for example, a boy from high school, the only one I knew who went to Vietnam, an awkward, nervous, and ironic student with a precocious sense of life's weight that made him seem always in retreat. A gifted musician, he shared my idiocies in chemistry. He was killed in the back of a lorry, among the odd and out, when a South Vietnamese unit mistakenly attacked some Americans: he had joined a band and gone over, at eighteen, to entertain. Would the war have been less murderous if the news we all saw had been filled with episodes like this, and not with the drained faces of anonymous soldiers? It is hard to know. We stubbornly and quite understandably go on believing that recognition, where matters of life and death are concerned, has at least the power to chasten.

One virtue of Peter Davis's recent film *Hearts and Minds* is its understanding that a picture of this war, to be unbearable, must only be vivid. Strangely, for a documentary about war, the film was shot in color. But color is somehow necessary to the part of the truth it has come to tell. Whatever our disgust with the American politics involved in Vietnam, our visions have been too much in gray: this was the trouble. Our leaders, simple or corrupt or helpless, were defeated by a sense of detachment that had no end. Nothing could penetrate the blight of sympathy that came of this terrible and stifling lack of knowledge. But oh, the surprise of watching those bombs land now, on the record, to rake fatally over a land that has the green look of farms and grasses. The administrative men of good will who began slowly to oppose the war—like Clark Clifford, interviewed in the film—had been frightened by dreams that could not show the solidity of flesh and blood. It was their tactic to protest against the "conduct" of the war, in terms that swerved carefully away from moral objection. Such a response is at last rendered null by *Hearts and Minds*; it turns the dreams into nightmares, by making them real.

In its portrayal of one special and acutely painful shock of recognition, experienced, across class boundaries, by a whole nation that was jolted from sleep when the drama it had wandered into struck a not quite perceptible climax, Mr. Davis's effort seems to me defini-

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tive. The situation claimed its victims long before its own features had grown familiar; *Hearts and Minds* registers the astonishment of those who were caught on the inside. Interviews with several veterans and their families are therefore at the emotional center of the film. Some are burdened by the immensity of what has been done; others, baffled or angry, point to their wounds and ask for a reason. A mother and father, Concord Emersons, who lost their boy in the war clearly feel that faith with their country must be kept up even at this cost: their settled belief, in the face of a death that makes no sense to them, that America means the best and the future and whatever will be is right, brings a sudden and local pathos to the spectacle of a nation cut from its most ancient political mooring, the uncritical trust in progress. An Air Force pilot sits on the stoop of his house in Oklahoma; asked if the country can learn from Vietnam, he shakes his head: "We're trying hard not to." It is the same man who will ponder his own inability to cry and find an answer in a war started without passion and fought without conviction.

I am writing on the Fourth of July. Every year the fire crackers outside get bigger and noisier. Yesterday, a friend told me of the temporary deafness he was suffering after a ball game, where a cherry bomb had exploded near him in the bleachers. Some kid heaved it over the fence, in there among the people, and left before he could know the damage or be caught. We are still playing games—in Vietnam, we heaved real bombs. The idea of a war without consequence for one side, and so without even the possibility of conscience, is surely something new in history. This was our war over the back-street fence; argument about its motive was frowned upon. Leaving aside the political reality of a civil war that turned partly on resistance to Communism, which was met on our side by the full-blown certitude of cold-war ideology, the issue for America was always whether this *disconnection* could be compassed. We interrupted an event that we would rather not have attended and then tried to escape. It was a good thing for us that we were caught.

Through much of its length *Hearts and Minds* affects one like the sight of a child who is reprimanded and, for the first time, looks up with that puzzled openness which is the suspicion that the world may have been just. The Americans in the film have been stopped after long indulgence. They are, right now, much too amazed to say anything coherently; later, they will become angry or reflective. The soldier who talks about almost dying in battle, when his last thought was the blank "This is it; I can't believe it; I'm dying in this shitty place," makes part of the story of any war. But, in Vietnam, the note of last-ditch sourness was plain truth. Americans never believed in Vietnam. This film, notable as a document for the countless unexpected statements it records and salutes in passing, touches one because it fixes Americans in a rare moment before disbelief has hardened into some more specific attitude.

As a vehicle for uncharted human facts about the war *Hearts and Minds* succeeds about as well as can be imagined. With every gesture, however, with every swooping close-up and self-scrutinizing fillip, its director convinces his audience that he is out to create not a document of shreds and patches but a work of art on the grand scale. In this other endeavor, though his failure is dismal and not at all noble, the result has the interest of any received and pretentious and authoritative instance of bad thinking. The film adopts some clichés and invents some; it is eclectic; and, in a queer but consistent way, the disease it exemplifies is of a piece with the one it depicts. What Mr. Davis thought he was doing in the employment of a football analogy for war, with impetuous coaches sitting in for too-sanguine generals, is a minor matter beside the question of his focus on every kind of small prosaic fanaticism of American life: was it these things—parades, holidays, competitions, all the little wellings-up of ritual that seem to be necessary to a community—that Mr. Davis believes got us into Vietnam? The war-is-football inanity is actually purloined from *Mash*,

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but *Hearts and Minds*, innocent of the earlier film's high spirits, appears to mean it in all solemnity.

The enemies, the responsible, the guilty ones: they ought to make an easy target. When once this is understood as Mr. Davis's governing worry, his editorial strategy falls clearly into place. The trouble is that so simply conceived an adversary is likely to be too particular and at the same time too universal. The war, we are offered at one point, was a case of straight imperialist ambition: Eisenhower's celebrated remark about our need for tungsten is quoted without comment, and certainly without the caution proper to irony. A montage of faces distorted by prowar sentiment, like the shots of aesthetically unappealing, because vulgar and aged, supporters of Nixon in *Millhouse*, makes the unwitting point that the only defect of character or ambition this film can traffic in belongs imprecisely to the American spirit itself. On the other hand *Hearts and Minds* succumbs to the temptation of sailing to a neat victory over all too personal scapegoats. It devotes a glorious passage to the Swiftian irrelevance and complacency of Walt Rostow unraveling his mastery of geopolitics. Very well: the battle scars of this unfortunate veteran of "political science" no doubt have a bearing on the overtly selfish element in our foreign policy. But do we learn, from the fact that he makes an ass of himself on film in very short order, an important lesson about the national character, or the science of politics, or the origin of our Vietnam policy, or indeed any subject but the effect of the Texas climate on a mind weirdly insulated already?

This wide-ranging and faintly truculent search for a method to the madness of Vietnam brings the film to no satisfactory conclusion. In shuffling through his own marked deck, Mr. Davis's bewilderment at the absence of any pattern differs from everyone else's only in being more irritably posed. The director's awareness of his falling short gives the film a slightly frantic air. So, when he portrays the monstrosity of war, his stress turns rhetorical in the most perfunctory way. Anecdotes of combat far more revelatory than a camera's bag of tricks are brought to a close by a camera trick: revealing, say, a crippled arm or leg on the man who has been speaking all along. It is like the novelistic gambit of coincidence, and with about the same merit as a guide to truth. Surprise, a tiny thrill of it, has become the first order of business. And in proportion as Mr. Davis stays clear of a genuine political alertness to the war, he grows interested in pathos for its own sake. His camera dwells for so long in close-up on two grief-stricken Vietnamese women that it loses the distance appropriate either to objectivity or sympathy and begins to seem an affront. We want to cry for the women, and with them, and throw away the camera. *Hearts and Minds* forestalls criticism of all such sequences by including the shout of an especially shrewd peasant who runs alongside the crew: "First they bring bombs, then cameras." Yet, though the film swells with nervous defensive measures of this turn, their effect is not so much deepening as nervous-making. The occasional premeditated doses of earnestness are simply one more evasion, a new kind of abstraction; and they do nothing to clarify the essential confusion, which persists among ordinary men and women, about what the war could have meant.

American response to the war has grown more rather than less Manichean over the years. It used to be said that such a response was the characteristic weakness in our conception of the Communist world as a whole, but, as the know-your-enemy classes in our public schools demonstrated to anyone obliged to take them, the treatment accorded to this wider topic had an extremely literal as well as a mythical force. The sense of being arrayed ineffectually against the powers of darkness came in with Vietnam. Dickens somewhere tells the story of a man who subjected his wife to merciless poverty along with a host of abuses more specially contrived, then went mad himself, and, on his deathbed, cursed her as the demon she must be, for otherwise how could she have borne all he had done to her. It is like this with America and Vietnam. Insofar as an unmeaning shudder goes through most people when

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they think of the war at all, nothing can be done apart from standing aside and letting the revulsion be spent. The intellectual's role, however, if he is faithful to all that he has witnessed, would seem to be that of therapist, in releasing others from the thrall of an irrational logic that can never lead to wisdom.

Hearts and Minds came out at the time of the last North Vietnamese offensive and the fall of Saigon. Shortly after I saw it, I spent an evening with CBS television's lengthy survey of the history of the war. The shared antihistorical and indeed antipolitical bias of these two efforts so apparently discrete from each other, seemed to me a kind of *trahison*. It was as if the makers of our official or semiofficial documents were all bewitched by the same false muse, who said: "Feeling and thinking about politics are *very* different things, you must never do both at once. Now is the time to feel; make the gestures of thinking, that will be enough; this is the only way you will earn people's trust."

Does any party benefit from this cloven fiction that threatens to become the stock in trade of mass journalism? When the grief is no longer there to report—is that when sober judgment begins or when caring ends? Several times, in the CBS offering, one heard that "we were misled," in exactly those words, a sentence denoting action without an agent. Misled by *whom*? By our government? To have said so would have showed admirable courage in the network. By the South Vietnamese? To have pounced there would have been at least straightforwardly opportunist. Well, we were misled. But let me suggest that it is the Hemingwayesque cynicism in talk about the war—our confidence that we were dupes of some vague antagonist—which misleads, most of all, by disarming the sting of experience with the self-regarding conceit of having been wounded.

A large, affluent nation, fabulously at the ready, launched into battle half-way around the world to defend a small country against the recalcitrant mood of its own people. So dangerously moral a quest had better have been left undone if it could not be embarked on wholeheartedly. For it was only America that was prepared for the war, not Americans: their reaction went through a stage of indifference, then resentment—nicely captured in the moment in *Hearts and Minds* when a soldier firing from his barricade, asked if he believes in his job, turns to reply "Yes—well, they say we're fighting for something . . . this stinks"—and finally a stage of fear. What we are seeing now is another phase of indifference, this time colored by fear. It has been called a new isolationism, but the *Mayagüez* incident gives sound enough evidence that the pride of standing alone, when provoked by a bad memory, will yield without protest to vengefulness.

That we were able to loathe our South Vietnamese allies as cowards and—impossible for an American to respect—*unsuccessfully* corrupt politicians, probably helped some of the steam to escape as the war wound down. Mr. Davis has a particularly dismaying portrait of a Saigon industrialist on the make, who says quite blandly and without even a smile: "I'm a johnny-come-lately to war profiteering. In Paris I saw that peace was coming whether we liked it or not. So I came back and decided to prepare for peace." But Mr. Davis is not the one to remind his audience of what perhaps needs saying, that the evil smell given off by our camp followers was never in question. Early on, Marshal Ky named Hitler as his favorite historical personage and was gently rebuked or interpreted.

I have gone on about the shoddiness of *Hearts and Minds* because its flaws seem to a large extent learned from nondocumentary films. Nothing could be more harmful to an art that puts fact before fiction than this appropriation of post-*Graduate* tics to conceal an unsteady point of view. In the future, before building his effects, I hope the talented Mr. Davis will sit still awhile to think what he is building toward. But, as with many documentaries, the tale here really does know more than the teller. A growing complexity in the American response to the war is plain when

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one sets a sequence in *Hearts and Minds* about the patriotic returned prisoner, Lieutenant Coker, against the film clip of a draft resister, Eddie Sowders, giving himself over to the authorities. Lieutenant Coker speaks of American courage, of survival, of the eternal boy-scout verities, and he is attended to by lucky audiences of mothers and children who are glad to know how good they were or will be. Eddie Sowders speaks with the unassuming eloquence and morality of a good man who has been found by a conscience greater than himself. And, when one compares these two very recognizable figures, the shock is that Eddie Sowders radiates an energy the older type of hero, traveling by rote, can no longer command.

The most likely movement away from cynicism—possibly for all people, certainly for Americans—is into sentimentality. This ought to be resisted by all those who were strong enough to resist the war: they will surely need to remain tough-minded while they preserve the memory of one part of the fight. Unfortunately, they will not be aided by the current of an antiwar rhetoric that became more popular-frontist and less specific with each passing year. (One could trace a fairly constant decline in the intellectual content of antiwar celebrities, from Hans Morgenthau and Senator Morse to Daniel Berrigan and Senator McGovern: Ellsberg appears for Mr. Davis in the part of decent intellectual, rather than any number of others whose conversion was less sudden and public.) For the imaginative purposes of the nation, Vietnam is our recent history. Taking care lest the record be purged of nuance will be one necessary preoccupation of the near future.

I should think the way might be open for a documentary that told the full story of this war as it was experienced by a nation that deceived itself into great wrong. The monotone of daily battle reports has been broken, let us hope forever; the raw material, interviews, combat footage, debates in the Senate, is there for a film to be made of; and, in the one that has been tried, the mistake of artful hedging looks so obvious as to bar repetition.

Another try at describing the war would tell of the paradox of a mass suffrage democracy in which the government must decide quickly and yet decide with more than the tacit consent of those it rules. It would show the distrust of politics, unvoiced and without a chance of reaching its object, which impaired the expression of will, including the will to refuse, among a people for whom international politics had taken on an exotic look. It would record the baffling removal of those who sacrificed from knowledge of their sacrifice, and the choked flow of information in an atmosphere glutted with news. Finally it might, a little hopefully, draw a moral from the Renaissance allegory of the knight who rode into combat as a subtle monster of will, and, out of the trouble sown by his arrogance, was made anew and rode back as a man. The disconnection we all suffered from can be healed only by being truly known. □

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David Spitz

On Human Nature

If man is a rational animal, it is surely odd that he so often debates questions whose answers must be presupposed before the debate can take place. (I use the term "man" here in its primary dictionary meaning, to denote the human species.) This oddity is particularly pronounced in discussions of human nature.

Consider two of the more perennial questions: Is man an autonomous or a conditioned being? If, or to the degree that, he is an autonomous being, is his reason the servant or the master of his passions?

Now clearly, to discuss these questions at all, one must assume and not look for the answer, that is, one must begin by accepting as true, and therefore rejecting as false, one half of each dichotomy. For if, to take the first question, man is a conditioned animal, molded by forces outside his control and in most cases—as with Freud's (or Marx's, or Marcuse's, or Skinner's) insistence on the importance of unconscious and irrational influences that dominate human behavior—beyond his knowledge, he can only think and act as he has been conditioned to think and act. Then it doesn't really matter what you and I, for example, may say here: for I *have* to say what I am about to say, and you not only *had* to come here, not only *have* to listen to me (or not listen to me, as the case may be), but *must* react as you will. Nothing I may say can possibly change you, and nothing you may say can possibly change me; or, if we are to affect each other, this too is already given by the nature of what has previously been done to us. In effect, we are about to act out a charade, with all the words and actions predetermined for us by forces or actors somewhere out there.

Read at a conference of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, May 30, 1975.

If, however, we are to engage in a meaningful discussion, we can only do so by assuming that we are autonomous or relatively autonomous men, not conditioned beings, or at best only partially conditioned and hence partially autonomous beings.

Similarly, I must assume that you and I are not only rational but that in some measure at least our reason can indeed govern our passions. This is not to deny that men are, as Hobbes and Hume argued, creatures driven by (perhaps insatiable) desires, and that reason then enters to show us how we may best or most effectively satisfy those desires. Nor is it to deny that some men are often controlled by their passions, and perhaps all men are sometimes controlled by their passions. It is only to insist that in order to understand even this much, in order to know that we are creatures of desire and that reason is an instrument for the satisfaction of those desires, we must do so rationally. We must rationally understand the irrational. Even if we employ seemingly irrational means to move seemingly irrational men to what we take to be rational conduct, we must do so rationally; that is, we rationally employ irrational methods to control irrational men. But then, the rational use of irrationality makes those irrational methods eminently rational.

More than this: what distinguishes man from the other animals is that he not only acts, he gives, or is asked to give, reasons for his actions. He is the one creature on earth who asks the question, Why? Why have you done, or why do you now want to do, A? Why have you not done, or why do you not now want to do, B? And since there is always a pleni-

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tude of answers, since there are always reasons, we seek to discriminate among them: we seek to distinguish sensible from incoherent or illogical reasons; reasons that take into account the consequences—as far as we can conceive them—of our actions; reasons that are grounded in empirical reality and not fanciful situations; reasons that carry weight on moral and prudential grounds and do not rest merely on arbitrary preferences. In effect, we seek to make sense out of what would otherwise be a senseless world. We seek reasons that are empirically sound and philosophically sane.

I would dwell for a moment on this last point. For what I contend is that we need not simply causal and functional hypotheses—theories, if you will—to explain human behavior; we also require standards in terms of which, or grounds on the basis of which, we may properly evaluate, justify or condemn, that human behavior. We need to make judgments of right and wrong—about the war in Vietnam, about affirmative action, about cases of civil disobedience, and the like. Hence we are concerned not simply with facts but with ways of looking at facts, with categories that give meaning to those facts. We seek to relate those facts to purposes, to ends on which men are sorely disagreed but with respect to which they cannot avoid taking a stand. This, or at least this, is what it means to be human.

Now, if what I have said is at all persuasive, we must proceed on the assumption that the dichotomies I originally set forth are literally absurd. No matter how socialized, conditioned, manipulated man might be, he still has a measure of choice: he has a mind with which to conceive or to entertain *some* alternatives, and freedom of will to make a judgment among them. Even more, he can conjure up or consider moral principles by which to regulate and guide his behavior, that is, by which to restrain some impulses or desires and to indulge others. He is not only a rational, he is a moral creature. He is also, perhaps distressingly but also challengingly, a responsible creature—both for what he does and, so far as it lies within his powers to control events, for what he allows to be done.

In these terms, it is surely a mistake to ask whether man is solely good (or cooperative, or altruistic) or solely bad (or competitive, or driven only by self-interest) or solely indifferent (or amoral, or apathetic). He is not solely any of these things because he is all of them, though clearly individuals possess and manifest these and other qualities in different combinations and degrees, and not always consistently but variously in response to diverse circumstances. The hangman who plays gently with children, the concentration camp commandant who listens sensitively to a Beethoven quartet—but the point is too obvious to warrant further elaboration here.

Nor is it less absurd to treat seriously the alleged issue of individuality versus sociality, as if these were discrete and antagonistic terms. Clearly, a man is what he is by virtue of the fact that he was born into, and raised in, a community. He is not a man by himself, he is never totally different from everyone else; otherwise we should not be able to communicate with him, understand him, relate to him. Nor is he totally like everyone else; otherwise we should have no problems with him, no collisions, no estrangements, no cause to like or dislike him; we should all think alike, act alike, be alike. Individuality refers to uniqueness in some things; humanity entails likeness in other things. In fact, he is an individual only because he is a social animal. The terms "individuality" and "sociality," far from standing in inherent and consistent opposition to each other—though individuals may and at times do stand in opposition to particular social demands—are and must be mutually sustaining, because complementary, terms.

EVEN WHEN WE TURN to more sensible, though controversial, notions of human nature, we are plagued by similar oddities.

What can it mean, for example, to ask whether men are equal or unequal, the same or different? Surely they are not all equal (or unequal) in all things, or at least a man who is superior to another person in one thing (say medical knowledge) may be inferior to that person in other things (say political judgment). When, therefore, we speak of equality we can only refer to certain kinds of equality, or equality in what we take to be the important things. But important for what? and to whom? Surely not simply to the individuals involved, but also to the society whose very notion of the structure of relationships requisite to the building and maintenance of community is at stake. Important, therefore, not only for an individual's but also for society's sense of justice.

Consider in these terms the problem posed by the plank of Carneades: Two persons, neither of whom can swim, are adrift in an open sea, with but a single plank at hand. When they seize the plank, they quickly discover that it will not bear their combined weight. The plank will support one of

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them, but not both. Which of the two has a legitimate claim to its use, and on what grounds?

If both persons are equal to the point of identity—in age, sex, intelligence, talent, strength, virtue, and the like—there is clearly no ready answer. (Apart, perhaps, from the tossing of a coin or by resorting to the children's game of odd and even fingers, which is purely a matter of chance. Is a lottery, then, the true principle of justice for a society of equals?) For then no differences enter to justify preferential treatment for either. But what if there are differences, say, of age or sex?

In the age of chivalry, if one of the two persons were a woman, the adult male would doubtless—as a gentleman—gallantly abandon himself to the deep. But apart from the fact that not all men are likely to be gentlemen in such circumstances, the advent of the women's liberation movement renders such a gesture inadmissable. In our day, each person—male or female—is now required to grant the other merely an equal right.

If one person is old and the other young, it might be argued that the former has lived his life while the latter should not be denied an equal opportunity to achieve longevity. But what if the older person cherishes the prospect of a few remaining years, and is in addition an Einstein or a Toscanini, while the child is a cretin or an incorrigible scourge? Shall we deny a superior claim to genius? Shall we deprive society of a greater social good?

Shall we then, with Carneades, argue that in such a situation the order of justice ends and the principle of self-preservation begins? If this is in fact the resolution, does it not shift the governing principle from equality to inequality? For then superior cunning or strength rather than (say) virtue prevails; and these are surely as irrelevant to equality as they are to any conceivable principle of political right.

Or shall we, in this dire case, look with the Jesuit teacher Suarez to the Christian principle of charity? Clearly this is most acceptable, provided the person at the other end of the plank is a Christian, and that he will observe the requirements of his religion. But what if both are Christians, or neither is a Christian? Or what if one is a Christian but finds himself or herself psychologically unable to act according to the tenets of this admirable teaching? Will we not once again find force or guile to be the dominating principle?

Assuredly, if a notion of human nature must accord with the realities of practical life as well as with the stipulations of justice, the principle of equality cannot by itself resolve such a conflict between competing egalitarian claims. We need to look outside equality for a standard that will help us decide questions of equality. We need, no less importantly, to understand precisely what we mean when we talk about equality.

If by equality we mean equality of opportunity, we are committed, paradoxically, to inequalities of result; for equality of opportunity, from this standpoint, is no more than a fair instrument for determining allocations of place and power on the basis of natural rather than artificial differences. If by equality we mean equality of condition, then we make difficult if not impossible the emergence of individuality, of differences that enable one person to manifest special gifts and talents not possessed by another. Does equality entail respect for every person's life and liberty? If so, shall we empty our jails, remove the traffic lights, and never, no matter what the circumstances, send men to die on the battlefield?

Let us look a little closer at this idea of liberty, which is surely central to any liberal or socialist idea of what it means to be human. At a minimum, liberty seems to mean the freedom to do what one wants. There is, however, a problem. Men, or some men, often want what is not good for them; in satisfying their desires they fail to satisfy their needs. As Rousseau, Hegel, Marcuse, and others have argued, therefore, they should not be free to do what they want; they should be free only to do what they ought to want, and they ought to want it because it accords with their needs, and consequently with what is right and good. Many, however, are too stupid or ignorant to know what they ought to want, and others are too selfish or wicked to do what they ought to, even though they know full well that they ought to do it. Hence it is necessary for wiser and better men to compel them to act rightly. But in thus being forced to do what they ought to do, what in fact they would themselves do were it not for their ignorance or wickedness, they are actually being forced to do only what they *really* want to do, that is, they are satisfying not their false desires but their true needs. Hence they are *really* free.

If to be human, in other words, is to be free, we can (in this construction) only be human if we correctly understand what freedom means and then act in accord with that understanding. So it is that liberty, which seemed to mean the freedom to act as one wants, turns out to mean the freedom to act as Someone Else wants you to act, that is, coercion in a right cause.

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But this is surely an odd use of language and a mistaken idea of liberty. Liberty, if it means anything at all, entails the freedom to choose. In order to choose, there must be alternatives from which to choose, and hence the very real possibility that in choosing one may choose wrongly. But this is not merely a *necessary* risk; it is precisely what differentiates an adult from a child, autonomy and responsibility from dependence. Without the right to choose, whether this be the right or wrong choice, without the right to be wrong, a person is not fully human; he is certainly not free. Accordingly, whatever else we may say about human nature, it is surely the case that without this liberal view of freedom—what may be called *negative* as distinct from *positive* liberty—there can be no humanity.

TAKE FINALLY the issue of malleability. Is human nature permanent or changing? And if changing, how malleable is man? The answer, I think, is not only that we don't know but that in some respects we don't want to know. The answer, also, is that human nature is probably both, or, perhaps more accurately, it is our conceptions of human nature that are probably both. Let me explain.

Unless there is some permanence to human nature, unless men today are in certain crucial respects very much as they were 500 or 2,000 or more years ago, we could not understand Socrates and Moses and Jesus, Homer and Dante and Shakespeare. That we can read these forebears, understand and learn from them, that we can in fact accept their teachings, or some of their teachings, as relevant and applicable to our lives today, demonstrates that they were like us, they faced many of the same problems we face, and they resolved them in ways we are prepared to consider as appropriate today.

Yet human nature, or at least our conception of human nature, has changed too. Some once thought, and some still think, that half the human race is inferior to the other half; yet today it is abundantly clear that men and women are morally and intellectually alike. And while it is true that human follies have led, in all too many cases, only to further follies, we believe—or some of us believe—that there has also been an appreciable increase in wisdom, or at least that the state of affairs in certain parts of the world today (say with respect to individual freedom) is appreciably better than it had once been. To have moved from slavery through feudalism to capitalism, for example, as even Marx emphasized, was a progressive act. To have moved from dynastic to democratic rule constitutes another great advance. And it would be hard to maintain that these shifts in economic and political arrangements, along with the rise of the great cities and the diffusion of cultures, did not have major effects on human nature, or at least on the natures of those men and women who were once subjects and are now citizens. If and as societies move closer to certain ideal conditions—the further removal of unwholesome restraints, the spread of knowledge, the assurance of peace and material security—the way will be opened for the emergence of new potentials that cannot now be fully anticipated.

But I said earlier that in some respects we do not wish to know the answer to the question, how malleable is man? even though the answer to this question might well determine the limits that man's nature would place on our ideal political and social arrangements. Despite (perhaps because of) the Nazi experience, we do not wish to know the ultimate depths of cruelty and degradation to which man's nature can descend. We do not wish to cultivate the kind of conditioning that a Skinner offers us, because we recognize that if man could be made into what Skinner would make of him, he would no longer be recognizably human; he would be a robot. We hold to certain conceptions of humanity and dignity that preclude infinite experimentation.

And this, I think, is where we properly end. Man is a protean animal, all the things both noble and base that historians and philosophers have said of him. He is both enlarged and limited by circumstance and by his society's values and practices. But he is molded, above all, by the promises gleaned from the visions that man has held of Man, from moral conceptions of what it means to be a just and decent and complete human being. It was doubtless the realities of man's baseness that led Jeremiah to utter his terrible warning: "Cursed is every man that has faith in man." But it was the realities of man's nobility that led Pietro Spina, the protagonist in Silone's novel *Bread and Wine*, to affirm his promise: "Man doesn't really exist unless he's fighting against his own limits."

We do not know, and we do not want to know, the full nature of human nature; for then not only the mystery but life itself would be at an end. It is only the striving, the testing, the unfolding of that nature that makes possible the dignity and creativity of the creature we call Man. □

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Lawrence W. Hyman

Free Speech and Political Realities

A few years ago, extremists on the campus were trying to prevent students from listening to anyone who would defend U.S. policy in Southeast Asia. More recently the chief targets of such harassment have been speakers who claimed a genetic basis for academic failure and success. Such actions have, of course, disturbed believers in civil liberties. I share this traditional belief in the value of an open encounter among all opinions and have participated in faculty efforts to uphold the principle of free speech for all. But I am not so sure, or at least have become less confident, that our traditional defense of free speech is effective or cogent. When you confront people who feel that their basic values, and in some sense their survival, are threatened by a speaker, a sermon on free speech tends to sound a little like a sermon on turning the other cheek to people facing a gun.

Let me illustrate by referring to two incidents at my own campus. Dr. Mehdi, a representative of the Arab governments (and a strong opponent not only of Israel but of American Jews who would like our country to support Israel), was invited to speak at a campus of the City University. He was almost prevented from speaking by a small group of Jewish students. Dr. Shockley, who supports the view that the poor academic record of many black students is genetically determined, encountered even more hostility.

We all know what to say: that much as we deplore the views of the speakers and sympathize with the feelings of the two minority groups (both of which have suffered enough), we must uphold the principle of free speech, since this principle is one that we all depend on—including, of course, the minority groups. But although we know what to say, those of us who have tried to say it in *actual situations* also know how ineffective these arguments are. For even when most of our listeners understand and even sympathize with the principle, principle is never as strong as one's immediate interests. What good is it to uphold a principle if we (whoever "we" are), are destroyed in the process? Our immediate fears and interests, *whoever* "we" *may be*, will always come first. Self-preservation is the first rule.

AND IT SHOULD BE. Freedom of speech is of no use if we are destroyed. We would be foolish if we allowed abstract principles to take precedence over concrete realities. If we are to make a strong case for free speech we must build our arguments not on noble abstractions but on our need to do whatever is necessary to advance our political interests. Most of us are not cut out to be martyrs; nor do we want our cause to suffer martyrdom on a cross made up of the First Amendment and the *Aero-pagetica*. The defense of free speech for our opponents must be seen not as a cross to bear but as another weapon in our efforts to realize our political goals.

But how can allowing our opponents free speech help us? How can the attack on the right of Jews to hold on to Israel help the cause of those who want to protect Israel? Or the right of Dr. Shockley to "prove" that blacks are genetically inferior in intellectual capacity help those who look to better education as an avenue of escape from the poverty and degradation encompassing so many blacks?

To take the first incident, that of Dr. Mehdi, I would argue that to suppress him would create the impression that the Arab position is so strong that it might convince people if they were allowed to hear it. If the speech is allowed, however, the arguments presented by a speaker like Mehdi can be refuted. In the one case, we have a picture of a lone, courageous Arab jeered by a mob. In the other case, we see and hear a vituperative attack upon not only Israel but on all Jews and their American supporters. Which scene is likely to win more sympathy for the Arab cause?

The same situation confronts those who are convinced that Dr. Shockley's viewpoint on race and intelligence is inaccurate and immoral. Is suppression of his viewpoint likely to convince most Americans that he is wrong; or would suppression convince most Americans that his argument is so strong that those who proclaim racial equality are afraid to let the argument be known? Surely it is the latter impression that will get across. For if his argument is so illogical, why can't it be refuted rather than suppressed?

Dr. Shockley's argument cannot be refuted, it is often said, because many people have such a strong emotional need to believe in something that they are

(*continued on page 412*)

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Luther Carpenter

Recreating Liberty?

THE NEW LIBERTY: SURVIVAL AND JUSTICE IN A CHANGING WORLD, by Ralf Dahrendorf, Stanford: Stanford University Press. 99 pp. $5.95

Ralf Dahrendorf, the author of *Class Consciousness in Industrial Society* and *Society and Democracy in Germany*, is an American-style academic liberal who has worked to expand democracy. He was a leader in Germany's Free Democratic party, then a commissioner of the European Economic Community, and now is director of the London School of Economics. This, his latest book, is not one of the high points of his distinguished career. Nevertheless, to *Dissent* readers The New Liberty is useful if they find ways of dealing with the issues with which Dahrendorf here is wrestling.

Dahrendorf's subject is the crisis of our time, and his aim is modest: to make a contribution to public debate. His perspective is important: the dangers to liberty in the social transformation that is required to meet inflation and the end of easy economic growth. Yet *The New Liberty* is often annoying. Ideas are rarely worked out. The subject shifts constantly and is arbitrarily limited. Social democracy is airily excluded from a simplistic comparison of socialism and capitalism; a discussion of the underdeveloped countries ignores all but those on the threshold of development. These faults clearly relate to the book's form, for it is a reworked version of his Reith BBC radio lectures of late 1974.

Dahrendorf starts with the statement that postwar society is too flawed to maintain itself:

> ... this era was above all characterized by a socio-economic syndrome consisting of growth expectations, a consumption orientation, the reliance on international prerequisites like free trade and convertibility as well as national ones like full employment and social welfare, a slightly self-conscious neglect, or perhaps the repression, of awkward matters such as pollution, or even the nuclear threat, and other features related to it.

The limits of growth, the end of cheap energy, and the social dissolution caused by inflation shake the foundations of this syndrome. Dahrendorf cannot dispute the facts cited by popular doomsayers but tries to reassure himself that there need not be sudden collapse or revolution. A sudden slide into apocalypse at the end reveals how anxious he really is: "The first test of our ability to cope will come soon, probably in the two years immediately ahead."

Dahrendorf admits that he has "no patent solution" to inflation or to limits of growth. His contribution is a succession of points that can be read either as partial solutions or as defense mechanisms against admitting how bad the prospects are. Many of his points revolve around the assertion that common-sense solutions are at hand but blocked by defects in the political mechanism. His common sense may well underestimate people's desperation. It sketches outcomes that would save the system if only every party were to give up something. Take his solution to inflation:

> ... its basic elements of a feasible anti-inflation policy are known. A true social contract involving not merely the unions, but all those responsible for determining prices, and incomes, and the spending of public money, is not entirely out of the question; and while the idea of a moratorium on all price and income increases and on printing money, for say two years, may seem far-fetched at the moment, it is not an absurd idea.

Such a compromise would be much more democratic than President Ford's policy, but Dahrendorf is politically naive in assuming that it is an obvious solution blocked only by defects in the political mechanism.

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But the content of such a policy is not Dahrendorf's immediate concern; he concentrates on the blockages, and on their impact on liberty. Bureaucracy, he writes, forms a barrier that both citizens and leaders are unable to penetrate. Implementing part of the socialist agenda has led to "the ossification of justice," in which full employment, minimum wages, and social security make people defensive and unwilling to change. Economic interests, of both capital and labor, are bound into obsolete expectations of growth. Political decision-making has become complicated and deadlocked because so many interests want to participate.

Now, these are not points that can be shrugged off easily. In making them, Dahrendorf faces the fact that it is not enough for democrats to try to extend the gains made since the war. He hovers between rejecting some of these gains to return to a simpler classical liberal parliamentarianism, or retaining these gains in a new political configuration. Thus Dahrendorf admits that participation is a democratic goal, but his classical liberal reaction against organized interests often leads him to want to reduce participation. He fears that interest groups convert representatives into delegates, and he desperately desires the creation of a "general political public," to put sectionalism in its place. This is an understandable goal, a kind of pale embodiment of the "general will," but it is vitiated by overtones of the classical liberal myth of the independent, atomized individual.

Dahrendorf refuses to look for a credal base (such as democratic socialism) to unite his general political public. His potential constituency consists of well-meaning individuals who don't identify with their agencies or corporations, "unorthodox leaders," and "the revolt of the individual." He concedes that this is not a strong or reliable social force, and that these individuals are often potentially authoritarian and unwilling to make the sacrifices he anticipates. At the end of the book, stymied in his quest for a social force that would give substance to the general political public, these contentions cave in completely to the reality of interest groups:

> However distasteful the idea may seem to the classical liberal, we need a second level of organized interest which is both independent from and related to parliament. In this body the social contract might find its organized expression—an Economic and Social Council perhaps which brings organizations into a structure of general responsibility and makes it therefore impossible to ignore them and unnecessary to fight them. In order to cope with the problems of the day, the general public will have to be different from that of the past, general and organized at the same time, a public of individuals, but not of individuals alone.

This is a surprising ending to what had been an effort to defend a classical liberal conception of the supremacy of representative political institutions and the economic marketplace. Dahrendorf comes to it grudgingly, rather than accepting the pluralist argument that the creation of many organizations between the atomistic individual and the state can give individuals opportunities for expressing different parts of their personalities.

DAHRENDORF has a long way to go to incorporate an Economic and Social Council into his liberalism. Only when this is done will we know if such a Council is a capitulation to corporatism that would perpetuate the existing structure of privilege and power, or if it is a liberating device that might force the rich and powerful to recognize others.

Dahrendorf will have to face two issues he is unwilling to face in *The New Liberty*: class and power. He arrives, in fact, at the Economic and Social Council because he cannot bear to see a confrontation between the state and "mighty organizations." But he does not deal with the powers and structure of the Council or its relations to the state. He seems to hope that it would achieve consensus and avoid using power, which is not very likely when we consider that the growth and running-down of industries and the allocation of energy are two of the issues that brought Dahrendorf to this expedient.

To work out his idea, Dahrendorf will have to examine the possibilities and limits of negotiations, which may well replace legislation as the vehicle for policy, the enforcement of the Council's results, and the economic planning that is implied in such a deviation from classical liberalism. Having an Economic and Social Council to avoid conflicts also means that class cannot be ignored. The sacrifices to be made by different groups and the distribution of goods and opportunities will inevitably become conscious issues. By denying that a class polarization exists, Dahrendorf implies that income distribution and class distribution of opportunity are not issues at all. Yet he argues for inequality as a source of diversity in society. In a stable or shrinking economy, taking this line and refusing to admit the reality of class means in effect to require the bulk of the sacrifices from the weakest and poorest people.

The unwillingness to bring class and power into the picture also weakens Dahrendorf's other main hope for preserving liberty while slowing inflation and the limits of growth. He argues that history

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often moves by a kind of mental leap, in which perspectives are changed and past problems cease to matter. Thus his answer to the opposition between the cult of growth and zero growth is a new concept of progress as "improvement." "Expansion is about quantity, about organizing society in such a way that a continuing increase is possible in output and demand, income and expenditure, people's needs and the means to satisfy them. Improvement is about quality."

But is the distinction this simple? Middle-class people could conceivably improve the quality of their lives without increasing their demand for goods and services, but working people would undoubtedly require *more* goods.

NEVERTHELESS, the kind of revaluation of economic goals Dahrendorf proposes would be necessary if a steady state economy were to come into effect. It would involve some extremely hard decisions: how to run down existing industries and replace them with others that conserve energy and resources; how to create alternative jobs for people so that they would not have to obstruct the process or perish like the displaced workers of the industrial revolution. As we have seen, however, Dahrendorf has not yet faced these issues, because such an economic transformation would require the use of power to eliminate some occupations and choices, and to replace them with others.

As examples of aspects of the quality of life that do not require expansion, Dahrendorf lists restoring old buildings, the arts, opportunities for recreation and play, and "underpasses for cars rather than for human beings." The point he explores most fully is the rigid division of life into compartments for education, work, and leisure. He does not deal, however, with getting education and leisure into work; he only mentions relating education to work, expanding adult education, and preserving the right of individuals to more than one job. Defending "moonlighting" is his response to the alienation Marx sees in the individual's confinement in a single job with a rigid work-week. Here too Dahrendorf's points are weakened because he does not look at the class structure—at the work people actually do and the ways it is enforced. He wants workers to be more willing to accept changes in the occupational structure, but in a steady state economy that would be very unlikely without paying workers for mobility. One imaginative suggestion recognizes this: a proposal that adults should receive three years of sabbaticals for education, so that they could go to school when they want to instead of having to go to the university before starting a career. Another idea, that citizens should donate a year to social service, is aborted because Dahrendorf cannot conceive of a libertarian way of organizing this service.

DOES this add up to a new liberty? Dahrendorf starts from a classical 19th-century notion of liberty, the independence of the atomized citizen and the economic man. He frequently stops his speculations because they offend against the freedom of economic man and the individualism he still sees in capitalism. He rightly emphasizes individual choice among "life-chances" as essential to liberty, but he is weak on relating these life-chances to opportunities created or thwarted by society.

Most of the time, Dahrendorf fights a rearguard action to reassert classical economic freedom and representative democracy against the rise of organized interests and the constriction of opportunity in a stagnating economy. This is not an unworthy effort, but Dahrendorf's struggles and anxieties suggest that it is futile in itself. A new liberty would go on to create new rights for individuals within large organizations and to use its economic planning to create many different life-chances for individuals to choose from. □

Edward Margolies

On Black Writing

BLACK FICTION, by Roger Rosenblatt. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 211 pp. $9.50.

Roger Rosenblatt begins this book by telling us what it is not—and one is relieved to discover that it is not another study promoting (or decrying) cultural nationalism or worrying about whether or not white critics have the credentials to review Afro-American writing. He does, however, warn that he has not written this work merely to examine black fiction on

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its own terms; rather he will attempt to show how these terms conform to a peculiarly cyclical vision of experience that, presumably, all black writers possess. If I read Rosenblatt's sometimes diffuse prose correctly, the cycle expresses, in effect, the feeling that strive, believe, desire as he may, the black American survives physically, spiritually, and socially only insofar as he suppresses his natural inclinations and pretends to roles the dominant white culture demands of him.

This perception of black American reality, rooted as it is in the basically unchanging circumstances of social and cultural racism, precludes black authors from sharing the white American writers' preoccupation with formal experimentation and shifting philosophical viewpoints. The hard facts of Afro-American life are quite enough to cope with, thank you—hence, where white heroes may be radical "innocents" acquiring experiences of evil in their own good time, the black protagonist cannot long afford this luxury if he wishes to keep his head above water. His heroism then frequently turns on his perception of the irony of American dreams (especially if one is black) and the futility of his situation. As a result his defeats are rarely glorious struggles with overwhelming forces but rather ignominious departures or discreet withdrawals. Although Rosenblatt does not always claim for black literature a special status apart from nonblack American writings (obviously they both share in the larger American culture), he does feel that some of the above-mentioned traits characterize it.

The trouble with this view is not that it is necessarily untrue but not always true, and Rosenblatt is therefore compelled to push, shove, and stretch much of the black fiction he deals with onto the procrustean bed of his definitions. Moreover, the works he discusses at any length were by and large written before the 1960s by authors who were born before 1930 (William Melvin Kelley and Claude Brown being the principal exceptions). Thus one may question whether Rosenblatt has taken an accurate gauge of the consciousness of the writers who had matured during the years Martin Luther King and Malcolm X assumed black leadership. In some essential respects these leaders not only affected the ways black artists thought of themselves but also altered their perceptions of white America.

But even if one were to grant Rosenblatt his selection of authors and works, one would have to grant him a great deal more to make these surrender to his thesis. He is, for example, constantly tacking on endings to works that might otherwise seem mildly upbeat. Thus we are told that the hero of Richard Wright's "Big Boy Leaves Home," having barely managed to escape Southern lynchers, will find "other mobs" awaiting him in Chicago. How does Rosenblatt know? And might not Big Boy find Chicago somewhat less oppressive (a small step forward) than the deep South he fled—as did his author? Interestingly, Rosenblatt does not deal with Wright's "Fire and Cloud" from the same collection of stories, whose ending suggests an even greater optimism. Similarly we are told that the protagonists of James Baldwin's *Go Tell It On The Mountain* and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* are doomed to repeat in their lives the cycles of futility and frustration each of them has already undergone. But are the endings of these books so pessimistic? Surely the measure of self-knowledge each of the principals acquires is no small triumph.

One does not want to dwell endlessly on the kinds of tortured readings Rosenblatt's thesis leads him to, but it may be instructive to cite some of these. The "point" of William Melvin Kelley's *dem* is not that "slavery [racism?] corrupts everyone," black and white alike, although one might wish Kelley meant this. His satire, however, focuses exclusively on whites. Richard Wright's Bigger Thomas is likened (seriously!) to the apostle Thomas and later to an upside-down Jesus. Baldwin's characters in *Go Tell It On The Mountain* are "islands inhabiting the island of Harlem" on the "other island of Manhattan and again these people are islands to each other." It is thus "fitting" that Rufus "who made some very bad connections uses a bridge to end his life." In *Native Son* black suggests safety and "whiteness is a source of terror." But further on in the paragraph we are told that "white signifies nothingness." Claude Brown's racial humor, "instead of lightening or diminishing the reality of events, in fact intensifies it." But does not the best humor do this? And here is Rosenblatt on identity: "... black heroes, despite strong efforts of resistance, become mirrors themselves and do not exist without the life outside them." But does not identity depend at least in part on how we are viewed by life outside us? From whence come our standards? And really, do any of Rosenblatt's black characters *totally* accept white definitions of themselves? If so, which? I cannot think of one.

INEVITABLY, Rosenblatt's constant refining of his thesis about black American writing begins to distort other American works. He makes general statements that go unsubstantiated. Hence "the enemies

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of modern white heroes ... even when externalized are theoretical and abstract. Whereas the enemies of black heroes exist within history." Are the enemies of Dreiser's, Hemingway's, and Fitzgerald's heroes "theoretical"? Do Faulkner's Snopeses exist outside of history? And again, we are told that the defeated nonblack heroes "die or go nobly" (Gatsby?), but blacks flee, depart, or accommodate themselves to caste. Who, one wonders, are the 20th-century white heroes who die or go nobly?

What chiefly troubles me is that for the general reader, unaware of the diversity of black fiction, much of what Rosenblatt writes may sound convincing. What white books, for example, could be more experimental, or subjective, or metaphysical, or abstract (which Rosenblatt says black books are not) than Ishmael Reed's *Mumbo Jumbo*, William Demby's *The Catacombs*, William Melvin Kelley's *Dunford's Travels Everywhere*, or LeRoi Jones's *The System of Dante's Hell*? This is not necessarily to praise them (Reed's reputation is considerably inflated) but simply to say they exist. Or when Rosenblatt tells us that unlike whites, black novelists do not resolve their novels' "contradictions" by abstract means, such as moral equivocation, pastoral impulse, and humor, one wonders about some of the black fiction Rosenblatt himself is discussing—as, for example, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man*, *Native Son*, *Banana Bottom*, *Simple Speaks His Mind*, among others.

None of this means, of course, that there is not an authentic black experience or that black writers do not write about that experience. But it is very nearly impossible to find the one formula or aesthetic or ideology (if that is what one wants to find) into which all such experience can be fitted.

What makes this all the more ironic from Rosenblatt's point of view is that when he appears momentarily to forget his cycles, he can be very good indeed. One will not read a more perceptive account of Langston Hughes's humor than the one in this book. And when "cycles" are applicable, as in James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man*, or in Chester Himes's *If He Hollers Let Him Go*, Rosenblatt does shed light. But all told the cyclic theory raises more questions than it answers, and more equivocations, exceptions, and obfuscations than are worth the trouble. Arna Bontemps once said that if there is a single tradition of Afro-American writing—from slave narratives to contemporary fiction—it is one that explores the various possibilities of freedom. Perhaps we ought to leave it at that. □

Joseph Clark

A True Record

THE SOVIETS: THE RUSSIAN WORKERS, PEASANTS, AND SOLDIERS COUNCILS, 1905–1921, by Oskar Anweiler. Translated from the German by Ruth Hein. New York: Pantheon Books. 324 pp. $15.

Whatever happened to the soviets under which, as Lenin described them, "the masses themselves determine" how and when elections are held "and with complete freedom of recall of elected officials"? We are discussing soviets in their original meaning, councils to effect direct democracy of the working people. That the word soviet has come to denote a specific government, a given political-geographic entity, is quite another matter. The subject of this book is the history of the rise and disappearance of soviets, in the original meaning of the term.

Anweiler is in an exceptionally good position to write this history, *wie es eigentlich gewesen war*. He is able to do this because he rigorously examines the record, allowing no preconceptions or prejudices, dogmas or ideologies to interfere with the writing of history as it happened. The reader may at times become exhausted by the author's indefatigable search through all of the available records, starting with Russian sources. But if one stays with it the rewards are tremendous. Here is a definitive history of an institution that left a lasting mark on socialist movements. And here is one of those unusual works of history, one that relentlessly pursues the truth; it provides enormous intellectual sustenance for anyone interested in the history of socialist thought.

The soviets became facts of history by the action of masses of Russian working people. None of the Marxist and socialist parties of Russia had foreseen these instruments of workers' power. Once soviets appeared in 1905, the various Russian socialist parties had to incorporate them into their political theory.

Paradox abounds. How did the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks originally react to the soviets? Anweiler shows that the problem for the Bolsheviks was their "mistrust of labor organizations that were

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independent of the party" and that originally there was no room in Bolshevism for the soviet idea. The record assembled by Anweiler reveals that Lenin, who was to hail the soviets as a new form of democracy, "could envisage the soviets only as *controlled* organizations; for him they were instruments by which the party controlled the working masses, rather than true forms of a workers' democracy." The Mensheviks quickly embraced the soviets and actively participated in forming the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers Deputies in 1905. And when Julian Martov, the left-Menshevik leader, returned from abroad to St. Petersburg in 1905 the soviet struck him as the "embodiment of our concept of revolutionary self-government."

Born in the abortive revolution of 1905 the soviets surfaced again in the revolution that overthrew Czarism in 1917. Despite their slogan, "all power to the soviets," the Bolsheviks insisted that the soviets could not be the instruments of their insurrection; the party-controlled military revolutionary committee carried out the seizure of power. Anweiler sums it up:

> The Bolshevik insurrection, cloaked by soviet legality and nominal soviet power just before the convocation of the highest soviet organ, implied the Bolsheviks' break with soviet democracy. This fusion of new soviet power and the Bolshevik insurrection proved disastrous for the soviets themselves; after this, they were merely servants of the party and a cover-up for Bolshevik dictatorship—a role they never had contemplated, and for which they were unsuited.

The overwhelming paradox, as Anweiler notes, is that the soviets' decline began on the very day of the Bolshevik seizure of power.

EARLY READERS of Lenin should have recognized that paradox. As far back as 1919 the Rand School of Social Science in New York issued a pamphlet by Lenin, "The Soviets at Work." In April 1918, Lenin still maintains that the soviets are organs of workers' democracy. But even at that early date Lenin is mainly occupied with the practical tasks of getting a desolated economy back in operation. Always alert to seize that link in a chain that is appropriate for the moment, Lenin sees it as the need for ruthlessly discarding democracy and asserting one-man dictatorship in every factory and railroad of the country. Lenin denounces the Socialist Revolutionists (SRs) and others who object to "the last decree on railway management, the decree which granted dictatorial (or 'unlimited') power to individual directors." Lenin derides those socialists who see unlimited dictatorial rule as "a defection ... from the democratic and other principles of the Soviet rule."

In the comforting "dialectic" that enabled Lenin to leap from a utopian "withering away of the state" to one-man rule, Lenin spells it out: "But how can we secure a strict unity of will? By subjecting the will of thousands to the will of one." How is Lenin going to get a transition "to higher forms of labor discipline"? Without equivocation, by "absolute submission to the personal orders of the representatives of the Soviet rule during work." What does the revolution demand now? Lenin answers: "Iron discipline during work, with absolute submission to the will of one person, the Soviet director, during work."

One may indeed wonder about the mind set of those who read the Rand School pamphlet in 1919 and were converted to Lenin's views. They were being converted to a concept of soviets completely at variance with their original promise of direct democracy. The prophetic warning of Rosa Luxemburg, written in prison in 1918, had come to tragic fulfillment. In her pamphlet, "The Russian Revolution," she wrote:

> In place of the representative bodies created by general, popular elections, Lenin and Trotsky have laid down the soviets as the only true representation of the laboring masses. But with the repression of political life in the land as a whole, life in the soviets must also become more and more crippled. Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution, becomes a mere semblance of life, in which only the bureaucracy remains as the active element. Public life gradually falls asleep, a few dozen party leaders of inexhaustible energy and boundless experience direct and rule. Among them, in reality only a dozen outstanding heads do the leading and an elite of the working class is invited from time to time to meetings where they are to applaud the speeches of the leaders, and to approve proposed resolutions unanimously—at bottom, then, a clique affair—a dictatorship, to be sure, not the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, but only the dictatorship of a handful of politicians, that is a dictatorship in the bourgeois sense, in the sense of the rule of the Jacobins ....

There was a flicker of political life in some local soviets between 1918 and 1921, which rejected the pattern of unanimous endorsement of whatever the party leaders put before them. That flicker was snuffed out by the fusillades of rifle and machine-gun fire directed at the sailors and workers of Kronstadt in 1921. The Kronstadt garrison had been demonstrating for a revival of soviet democracy. Lenin and Trotsky put an end to that and laid the remnants of the soviets and soviet power to eternal

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rest. It is fitting that Kronstadt has entered into the language of radical politics, meaning that moment when a Communist can no longer tolerate the betrayal of socialist ideals.

Students of Russian history and of socialist thought have an indispensable guide in Anweiler's book. □

Fact and Gossip

THE RISE AND FALL OF AMERICAN COMMUNISM, by Philip Jaffe. Introduction by Bertram D. Wolfe. New York: Horizon Press. $10.00.

By a quirk of history Stalin chose the American Communist party, surely one of the least significant parties in the scheme of world revolution, as the vehicle for a signal to the world that the Soviets were ready to start the Cold War after World War II. Soviet efforts to undermine other societies were as old as the regime itself, but these efforts had been suspended during the early years of the war for survival. When victory was assured, the Soviets again cranked up the machinery geared to subverting the governments of foes and earstwhile friends.

Indeed, the war was still raging in Europe and the Far East when the Soviet Communists used an article, signed but apparently not written by Jacques Duclos of the French Communist party, to make it clear that "peaceful coexistence" was really part of the dialectics of wars and revolutions. The heart of the Duclos article was a criticism of Earl Browder, for having "declared, in effect, that at Teheran capitalism and socialism had begun to find means of peaceful coexistence and collaboration in the framework of one and the same world."

The major contribution of Jaffe's book is the documentation he provides—mainly because Browder gave him the documents—valuable to students of the history of Communism. To the extent that the book is based on such evidence it is useful and interesting. When it departs into realms of conjecture and hearsay, it is far less useful.

Browder gave Jaffe copies of two coded messages from Moscow, spelling out the new line for American Communists after the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939. These were transmitted by the Communist International to a secret radio receiver Browder had set up for that purpose, monitored religiously by his trusted chauffeur. Moscow told the American Communists: "Tasks, bold struggle against war, no credits, fire against bourgeois dictatorship of own country, ruthlessly expose Social Democracy which has joined camp of reaction . . . ."

Sophisticated American Communists used to tell a "joke" about themselves. "Question: Why is the Communist party like the Brooklyn Bridge? Answer: Because it is suspended by cables." But the historian will still have to answer the question why in the world they needed these coded cables and secret radio transmitters. Perhaps if that radio message had arrived on August 24, 1939, the day after the Hitler-Stalin Pact was signed, it could have been of some use to the American marionettes. But by the time Browder's overworked chauffeur had received the message at the end of September (and a second one in October), the Communist International was publishing articles all over the world in favor of stopping the war against Hitler, against military conscription, and for directing major fire against bourgeois democracy. By the time the radio messages arrived from Moscow the American Communists had already figured out the line, and Communists from Norway to Belgrade had gotten the word—"antifascism" was out, "the overthrow of all imperialists" was in.

As a matter of fact, these messages from Moscow are only whipped cream on the shortcake of Moscow manipulation of foreign Communists. (Sometimes, however, the Russians couldn't and didn't manipulate foreign Communists. Even though Jaffe asserts that Communists everywhere and always did the bidding of Moscow, the most significant example of a refusal to do such bidding changed the world—Mao Tse-tung made his own Communist revolution against Stalin's orders.)

AN EXAMPLE of unsubstantiated gossip in Jaffe's book, *sans* documentation, relates to American Communist participation in the Spanish struggle against Franco fascism. Despite all the ugly aspects of Moscow's use of its secret police in Spain, the war against POUM, the execution of "deserters," it is unjust to denigrate the Communist youth who fought gallantly against Spanish fascism. Jaffe writes that the two highest American officers of the

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Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Robert Merriman, commander, and Dave Doran, political commissar, had been "shot one sunrise without trial by order of the well-known sadist, André Marty . . . ."

The "evidence" Jaffe cites is a conversation he had with Earl Browder, who told Jaffe he learned about this execution when he visited Spain in 1938. The amazing thing about this unsupported bit of gossip is that Jaffe had ample opportunity to check with John Gates, the man who succeeded Dave Doran as commissar of the Lincoln Brigade. Gates describes the circumstances of the day when Doran and Merriman were lost, which indicate that it was impossible for an execution to have taken place.

As Gates tells it in his book, *The Story of an American Communist*, the Abraham Lincoln column was behind enemy lines during the incident. Doran asked Gates to bring up the rear of the column. As they made their way toward Loyalist lines a messenger came running to Gates with word that contact had been lost with the head of the column, including its commanders, Doran and Merriman. Gates immediately ran forward and took the lead. From that time on, not one of the survivors in the entire Brigade saw Merriman or Doran again, alive or dead. How an order could have come from Marty (who, Gates notes, was not even in Spain on that fatal day!) to a column *behind Franco's lines* is something Jaffe would have to explain.

What probably happened? Gates recalls the last conversation he had with Doran on the very day he disappeared. They will never take me alive, Doran said, and apparently they didn't.

The careful reader of this book must learn to separate fact from gossip, and when he does, he will find much valuable data.

J. C. □

NOTEBOOK (*continued from page 404*)

not influenced by facts or by reason. These people, who may need to believe in the genetic superiority of Caucasians, or in the aggressiveness of all Jews, cannot be depended on to weigh the evidence of both sides. I would not disagree; and I am certainly not basing my support of free speech on any Miltonic confidence in the power of Truth to defeat Error. I would insist, however, that the suppression of opposing viewpoints would do nothing to counteract this tendency to believe what people would like to believe. In fact, suppression of opposing viewpoints would only serve to strengthen the conviction of many people that only the force of numbers or lung power (and ultimately firepower) can determine which side will win. And once this principle is established, all is lost for any cause that is liberal and humane.

For can anyone believe that American support for Israel can be gained by the threat of violence against Arab spokesmen? Or that people can be prevented by force from listening to doctrines of white superiority? Obviously not. The only way that liberal or radical causes can win support is by appeals to reason and morality. And it would be naive to suppose that these appeals to reason can be made by groups that try to intimidate opposing speakers. To weaken the democratic fabric of our society would make it almost impossible for any group to sway people by reasoned arguments. The political arena would then be open only to those who have the guns.

No one could expect this particular argument, or any similar argument, to affect a mob of enraged partisans. But if such pragmatic arguments are used, instead of appeals to abstract principle or to tradition, we can, I believe, gradually get most people, at least most liberals, radicals, and minority groups, to see that free speech for our opponents is not a quixotic gesture but a weapon that is indispensable in any political effort to advance our interests. □

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LETTERS

On Equality

Editors:

It is perhaps symptomatic of a tragic flaw in the otherwise excellent thinking in Steven Lukes' article on "Socialism and Equality" that he misrepresents the position of C. A. R. Crosland on the question. Mr. Lukes appears to indict all of "social democracy" when he cites Crosland as believing in the "meritocratic policy of widening the social base of recruitment to privileged positions." This "equality of opportunity to achieve scarce social rewards" is contrasted by Lukes to the "egalitarian socialist" focus on "equalizing the rewards and privileges attached to different positions."

If faced with a choice between these two extreme positions, one knows which side Mr. Lukes wants the reader to choose. In reality, of course, that is not the choice. If C. A. R. Crosland meant by a "distinct class stratification" a permanent sorting-out at age five—a stratification that might not only determine one's own social status but that of one's children—then Crosland is indeed nothing more nor less than a "meritocrat," and perhaps an aristocrat as well. But Crosland quite obviously meant something more fluid than the enforced status of IQ tests, as evidenced by his thought of "continuous traffic up and down [the social ladder]." I suspect that Crosland meant nothing other than what Lukes himself advocates when he says that "respecting autonomy points ... away from the ideal of a stable hierarchy." For the accomplishment of certain tasks one certainly must establish who has the necessary skills, or, as Lukes might say, "potentialities worthy of admiration," to perform the given task. One must have a doctor, one must have someone to hand the doctor his tools. That does *not* imply, however, that the doctor's skills ought to be more "respected" in society as a whole than those of the nurse, or, for that matter, those of a cabdriver or even of a sociology professor. Both Crosland and Lukes advocate "unstable hierarchies."

But more fundamentally, why the need to present this false dichotomy between "social democracy" and "egalitarian socialism"? It is, I fear, a direct result of a basic flaw in the Lukes article: his failure to relate the accurate abstractions of his thinking to real-life proposals. Lukes, in his conclusion, says only that "this is not the place to enter into the whole question of the 'socialist transition.'" If the only answer to the very real problems of inequality is a messianic "socialist transition," which Lukes and everyone else knows will never take place, and during which neither Lukes nor anyone else seems to know what *ought* to take place, then Lukes ought never to have begun his article. In fact the treasure of socialism, its "science" if you will, is its attempt to translate abstractions such as "equality" into reality for masses of people. That interplay, in fact, between thought and action can be and often is a productive interface that enriches both the thought and the deed.

If what Lukes simplistically calls "social democracy" (as opposed to "egalitarian socialism") has any distinguishing characteristic whatsoever, it is the fact that "social democrats" have to live in the world of people, houses, parliaments, and armies. They try—albeit occasionally unsuccessfully—to take Lukes' abstractions out of magazine pages and put them in terms of money, laws, and programs. If, in so doing, they create a "welfare state" to alleviate real, pressing, immediate human problems like hunger and joblessness, then so much the better for the hungry and jobless. It would be folly to claim that such welfare state measures are themselves "socialism"—but neither is the sterile intellectualism of essays on equality. If democratic socialism is to be something other than either the welfare state or a college major, Lukes must start relating to socialists working in the real world of politics—and those in the "real world" must start listening to Lukes.

ALEX A. SPINRAD
Washington, D.C.

STEVEN LUKES *Replies*:

I do not see that I have *misrepresented* Crosland's position, though I may be criticized by his defenders for attacking it. I did not imply that he advocates "a permanent sorting out at age five" or even "the enforced status of IQ tests" though the latter is quite compatible with "continuous traffic up and down [the social ladder]" (as Michael Young showed in his *Rise of the Meritocracy*). The contrast I had in mind was eloquently and precisely captured by R. H. Tawney when he distinguished between the "claim for an open road to individual advancement" and the desire "to narrow the space between valley and peak." In other words, Crosland (and one central strand in social democracy) advocates increasing individual mobility up and down the ladder—i.e., affording "maximum scope for individual self-advancement" (Crosland's words) *within* a hierarchy of positions characterized by structured inequalities of rewards, chief among them status. By contrast, the egalitarian socialist aims for a society in which the image of "the ladder" would be inapplicable and in which there would be minimal society—wide hierarchies of rewards. Of course the labor market sets—and perhaps always will set—constraints on the realizability of this aim. Of course, one must have doctors and nurses (a system of occupational selection) and perhaps structured inequalities of occupational rewards will always be needed for this purpose; but must they always approximate anything like the present span and shape and must they always constitute "a distinct class stratification"?

As for Mr. Spinrad's wider accusation of the failure in my article "to relate the accurate abstractions of [my] thinking to real-life proposals," I plead both not guilty and

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guilty. Not guilty to believing in a "messianic" socialist transition. I believe neither in messianism nor (as Mr. Spinrad appears to) in the notion that socialism is a "science." The "socialist transition" is a matter of practical politics, of which theorizing is, of course, an integral part—and the limits to what is "practical" may themselves at certain times be expanded by the consequences of such theorizing. I plead guilty, however, to not saying more about this. Let it suffice here to say that in this respect, as in others, the example of the thought and practice of Tawney would repay the attention of all present-day socialists. □

China

Editors:

I write to express my admiration for the essay "China by Daylight," which Mr. Donald S. Zagoria contributed to your Spring issue. It would be difficult to adduce another recent paper on this subject that is at once so penetrating, so comprehensive, and so balanced. For any open mind, it is indeed corrective of many current romanticisms regarding China—as the author intended. I wish one could be confident that the essay will be widely read.

OSCAR GASS
Washington, D.C. □

Arms Budget and Israel

Editors:

Sanford Gottlieb's piece, "U.S. Arms Budget and Israeli Needs," in your Spring '75 issue, appears to be a response to Edward Luttwak's "The Defense Budget and Israel" in *Commentary*, February 1975. Gottlieb's recitation of facts and figures on waste in U.S. defense spending is noteworthy, but it misses the points made so tellingly by Luttwak.

Taking inflation into account, it is not true that defense expenditures have increased in recent years. In stable 1975 dollars, planned defense outlays for 1975 are $41.4 billion lower than the 1968 Vietnam war peak, and $9.5 billion lower than the last pre-Vietnam year, 1964. Similarly, the percentages of both the federal budget and the GNP absorbed in military spending are down dramatically from 1968, and also significantly smaller than in 1964.

As Luttwak explains, the reason why this large-scale cut in U.S. defense spending (at a time when Soviet military expenditures are increasing) has not yet proven disastrous is the "sharp qualitative edge" in U.S. military technology. He gives a number of examples of this technology that are of vital importance to Israel. One is the Air Force "smart-bomb," a key factor in the Israeli recovery from the Yom Kippur attack. Second is the U.S. naval missile-defense system, which allowed the Israeli Navy to survive and emerge victorious against the much larger Egyptian and Syrian fleets. Third is Israel's pressing need for the F–15 fighter to counterbalance the growing MIG–23 component of Arab air forces.

Luttwak acknowledges that there is waste in U.S. defense spending. For so many Americans to believe that Pentagon budgets are largely waste, however, is as dangerous as it is wrong. If the "qualitative edge" of U.S. arms, such as in the very expensive and much-maligned F–15, is lost, not only Israel but all of us who are democrats, liberals, or socialists may end our days in a world either at the brink of holocaust or totalitarian triumph. (And surely as socialists we recognize that more radical and thorough-going steps must be taken to reform American society than the simplistic and obsessive liberal notion of lopping off billions from the defense budget!)

RALPH SELIGER
New York City

SANFORD GOTTLIEB *Replies*:

I wrote "U.S. Arms Budget and Israeli Needs" before Edward Luttwak's article appeared in *Commentary*, although the Spring issue of *Dissent* appeared later. The editors of *Dissent* requested the piece, I suppose, because they are aware of the efforts to align the American Jewish community behind the Pentagon budget, on the assumption that Pentagon spending helps Israel.

Some of it does help: the tiny slice that goes for the military equipment with the "sharp qualitative edge," which Mr. Seliger correctly cites as vital to Israel. But $2 billion a year would buy large quantities of sophisticated planes, bombs, and missiles for Israel, whereas the Pentagon's request in fiscal 1976 was for $104.7 billion in obligational authority. Most of the balance of over $100 billion, with the exception of some funds for research and development and for operation of sealift or airlift capacity, is simply irrelevant to Israel's defense needs.

More dollars for more overkill don't make Israel more secure; nor do the funds to maintain the old alliances created by John Foster Dulles and the new alliances being forged with Saudi Arabia and Iran; still less, the huge $15-billion bureaucracy of 1 million Pentagon civilians.

For Americans, only part of the problem is waste, albeit a very costly part. The other parts relate to foreign policy and internal democracy. Do we want to continue playing world policeman and world arms supplier? Do we want to prepare to fight nuclear wars as well as to deter them? If our answer to these questions is affirmative, we should support current Pentagon programs and strategies. If our answer is negative, as would be the case with most Americans, we should begin to wonder why Congress has failed to cut back the growing Pentagon budget. The fact is, the combined power of the White House, the Pentagon, the military-industrial firms, and the defense-dependent labor unions has blocked any meaningful cuts despite widespread public support for new federal priorities. Demo-

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crats, liberals, and socialists ought to reread Eisenhower's prophetic Farewell Address.

Mr. Luttwak repeats the Pentagon's major stock in trade by asserting that inflation has actually reduced military expenditures. There are four ways to test that seemingly simple truth. First, inflation has reduced the purchasing power of *all* federal expenditures, civilian and military, but the civilian agencies have to "swallow" inflation. *Only the Pentagon is given an annual increase higher than the rate of inflation*. The fiscal 1976 budget proposed a 35 percent increase in weapons procurement and research and development. Second, the military share of the federal budget has been decreasing largely because the bookkeeping system changed in fiscal 1969. The expenditures from Social Security and other trust funds were then added to the budget, swelling its size, and making the military slice *look* smaller. Third, the military's share of the GNP *should* go down as the economy grows at a time of relative international calm. Should more toasters and auto tires be matched by more missiles and bombs? Finally, the prior question that must be addressed is whether we need all the stuff that these huge sums buy.

In the final quarter of this century the major foreign-policy problems are likely to be shortages of food, energy, and natural resources; worldwide inflation; population pressures; the arms race; the spread of nuclear weapons; the exploitation of the oceans. None of them can be solved by military power. Most are exacerbated by it. But the Pentagon anticipates a budget of $148 billion in fiscal 1980. □

Overlooking the Women's Movement?

Editors:

I have been reading various radical analyses of contributors to *Dissent* over a period of time now and feel that you are overlooking the feminist angle completely in your prescriptions for an equal society.

Your contributors refer quite frequently to a changing world in which the "producers" will want to control production, never identifying who the producers are.

The producers, in the ultimate analysis, are the women, who produce the offspring, who in turn become the workers in the society. In your class-defined society, you do not address the women as a class, and I frankly feel that you are not only overlooking the women's movement, you are misjudging the importance of a women's political movement. If you believe that women will simply ride your coattails into a new order without altering oppressive institutions that you would leave untouched, I personally believe you are mistaken. So far, we seem to be "invisible" as far as your publication is concerned.

MARJORIE PLASTINA
Niantic, Conn.

THE EDITORS *Reply*:

If our correspondent will glance over the issues of *Dissent* for the last 5-6 years, she will see that the magazine has carried a great deal of material on precisely the issues she wants to see discussed. □

Arabs and Israel

Editors:

In speaking about the separateness of Jews and Arabs Bernard Avishai omitted to mention what I believe to be the main factor that led to it: the "separation" of 600,000 to 800,000 Arabs ("depending upon which statistics you use") from their ancient homes. The tremendous suffering created by the unwillingness of the Jewish community to let them return goes on and represents the main cause for the unending conflict.

The earlier displacement of 3,000 to 30,000 peasants ("depending upon which statistics you use") may have been accompanied by all the legal niceties, and I do not want to doubt Avishai's word on their compensation for the loss suffered. I do question, however, whether a traditional peasant who is forcibly transformed into a wage-earner will consider that change of social status a satisfactory compensation. As to compensation by receiving other lands I saw even last year—if the information I was given is correct—some of these peasants in miserable huts on the arid, stony slopes of the Carmel eking out a pitiful living, close to the land sold to strangers behind their backs.

A colonist is not necessarily a colonialist as Avishai states correctly. He may himself be a victim of colonialism but he is drawn, perhaps unwittingly, into the system when he participates in its economic fruits. On the other hand, slaughter and physical destruction of native populations is not an essential corollary of colonialism.

Avishai may rightly retort that somebody living in America on the proceeds of capitalist society should not point the finger at oppressed people who are trying to establish a new life in one way or another. Indeed, American socialists ought to have their sleepless nights, as have their brethren in Israel. But that should not lead either of them to close their eyes during the day instead of acknowledging that an economy ruled by a local bourgeoisie under foreign patronage and with foreign capital fits the classical picture of a colonialist society.

E. ANSCHEL
New York City

BERNARD AVISHAI *Replies:* *July 1975*

Mr. Anschel punctuates his letter with a stab at moral sanity that I find irresistible; but it is clouded with errors of fact and logic, which we ought to resist with great energy.

In my essay I had concentrated on the social and economic development strategy of the Yishuv in order to "probe to the nerves" of the conflict that culminated

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finally in the 1948 war. Mr. Anschel wants now to convince us that the consequences of this war "led to" its own primary causes.

What he seems to be implying is that the unwillingness of the new Israeli government to let these Palestinian refugees return to their homes after the war was shortsighted and morally indefensible, and that it helped to seed subsequent conflagrations. I suppose any fair-minded person would have to agree—but would have to do so cautiously. The wars of 1956, 1967, and 1973 were not fought by Arab governments for the sake of Palestinians as much as out of consideration for those maximalist (anti-Zionist, pan-Arabist, anti-"imperialist") political ambitions that had first been articulated by radically conservative leaders in Palestine from the onset of the British Mandate. If the tangible "suffering" of the Palestinians were the central concern of Arab states, the former would not have suffered for almost 30 years.

Moreover, a fair-minded person must consider the condition of the Jewish state at the close of this war before pronouncing judgment: it was left a barely contiguous garrison under siege and encirclement by hostile powers, with a convoluted and harassed border; it was faced with the task of absorbing six to eight hundred thousand refugees of its own (from these very Arab states); and it had also to establish normal relations with the large Arab minority that remained, whose loyalty to this new state was understandably suspect. Back any beast into a corner and you are likely to find out more about aggression than about the nature of the beast. I do not mean to denigrate Mr. Anschel's contention, but we must be more exacting in our specification of the fumbled moral challenge.

As for the morality of changing peasants into wage-earners, surely this has never been quite so melodramatic as Mr. Anschel would have it. It would have been neater, no doubt, if some emerging class of Palestinian Arab kulaks, not socialist Zionists, had caused the demise of traditional peasant society here, but let us not idealize the loss. I can assure Mr. Anschel that no Palestinian today would look up his old effendi were he to return to his old home. Modernization is always resisted but never for very long. By the way, Mr. Anschel's "information" about displaced Arab peasants on the arid (?) slopes of the Carmel has the ring of pure casuistry. Outside of some Gulf states, Israeli Arabs enjoy the highest standard of living in the Middle East. As I said in my essay, one could only wish with Rodinson (and now Anschel) that the economic improvement of Palestinian or Israeli Arabs was decisively relevant to their political claims; however this has not been the case. As socialists claim to know, men are motivated by imagination, not just hunger.

Moreover, before summoning us to join with him in condemning "slaughter and physical destruction" of native peoples (I think that this is why he put in this otherwise cryptic sentence), he might at least try to establish that "slaughter and physical destruction" happened. It emphatically did not—at least, not to Palestinian Arabs. To his credit, Mr. Anschel hints that he knows to whom this did happen. But perhaps he was shrewd not to let this observation interfere with the full bloom of his moral sanity.

His final image—that of Israel being an economy ruled by a local bourgeoisie, etc.—is as helpful as picturing Israel as some large kibbutz. Israel's local bourgeoisie is dominated by a labor aristocracy that coordinates and patronizes the economy by fiat; its foreign capital is collected and contributed mainly by American Jews who make perhaps too *few* stipulations about how it is to be invested; while its foreign patronage looks as steady as the price of oil. If Israeli socialists had only to worry about the indicators and the hypotheses with which Mr. Anschel presents us, slumber would be no problem day or night. □

Salvation in Parliamentarianism?

Editors:

In "Political Technicians, Corrupters of Democracy," in your Spring 1975 issue, Martin Spencer pinpoints correctly, I feel, the present phenomenon of the mediagenic candidate.

I must, however, disagree with Spencer on his point that the imposition of a parliamentarian electoral arrangement and mode of government would prove to be a solution to this problem.

(1) The party system in the U.S. is not conducive to ideologically motivated parties; witness the respective defeats of Senator McGovern and Senator Goldwater—both presidential candidates rejected by the American electorate because they were perceived as "extremists" (albeit ideologically pure and faithful to their supporters and partisans). Therefore it is unlikely that the two-party system would be at all conducive to a transformation resembling its parliamentarian counterparts. The strength of precedent shows that partisans of both parties are repelled by the polarities presented in the ideologically based choices a parliamentarian system would provide. Instead, the indication is that the squishy-soft center will prevail. This inclination is firmly adhered to both by party professionals and the voters at large.

(2) The parliamentarian system is not holding up so well either. In fact, one could argue that the present "disciplined party" government of the British Prime Minister's cabinet is evolving toward a presidential system along the lines of its American counterpart!

Thus the problem of the mediagenic candidate and the political technicians manipulating him or her crosses the boundaries of any political system (be it presidential, parliamentarian, *et al*). The solution does not lie in a change of the political framework as such but goes much deeper.

Nonetheless, kudos must go to Mr. Spencer for his fine article.

THOMAS LEPIONKA
Somerville, N.J. □

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A quick quiz on American socialism:

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☐ **B.** A socialist organization which works within the existing liberal-Left, with trade unionists, feminists, black activists and other reformers fighting to win victories right now. A group, unlike other past and present socialist organizations, which works within the Democratic Party's left wing.

☐ **C.** Publisher of a monthly *Newsletter of the Democratic Left*, edited by Michael Harrington, featuring incisive articles on the energy crisis, the food shortage, the general economic calamity, and timely reports from feminists, trade unionists and other Left activists around the country.

☐ **D.** All of the above.

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